

Wisdom, Prayer and Proclamation | Colossians

4:2-6

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we're dedicated to encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. Located in Ontario, Oregon, Pastor Patrick Daly preaches insightful sermons from the Word of God, offering practical applications for modern living.

We're delighted to share this sermon with you. All right. Well, good morning, everyone. As we're heading to our seats, you know, it's Father's Day and I'm still getting used to people saying a happy Father's Day to myself and the fact that I have five kids.

And I want to share a real quick story before we begin our message today. It's I think it's a very funny story. So this picture you see here is a couple years back.

My family and I went to an indoor mall and we had some Chinese food. We had a good time together. And my son, you kind of see his eyes.

He's kind of has this little awkward smile going on. So there's a story, you know, they say a picture is worth a thousand words here. You see the guy in the background, kind of looks a little bit like me.

[1 : 13] My side profile, right? If I was down. So what happened? So he went to the bathroom and he came back.

And you know, you see me wear maroon. It's one of my favorite colors. And in fact, I have a shirt that's like that. So my son coming into the cafeteria area, he runs over to this guy who looks like me.

He's like, dad, I want to hug and then he looks and and I promise you the look changes drastically from, I want to hug to who are you?

You're not my dad. And the terror in his face kind of shocked like, what did you do with my dad was absolutely hilarious. But I can imagine when you're that young, kind of scares you like you're not my dad.

And so I swoop on in and I pull, I'm like, Aaron, that's not dad. Come on. Come on. And he's like, yeah, not dad.

[2 : 21] And I now, I'm not saying the guy was, you know, there was some similarity. And I remember, he didn't notice any of this happening, mind you.

So I remember I got up and walked by. I'm like, I can see how similar this guy looked to me. And it was just, he's still kind of feeling bad and recovering that, you know, dad's here and not wearing a maroon shirt here.

I do wear other colors, even though I know I'm wearing maroon right now. So this, that was just a kind of a good Father's Day story. And you know, it just reminds me of, it's a great reminder for us today when we're celebrating Father's Day.

It's tying in not directly, but there is some similarity here when we're going over our message today from Colossians chapter four, verses two through six.

Right. We're going to learn today that Paul is emphasizing the importance of prayer, wisdom, and clarity in our walk with Christ. And just like how my son, he recognized that you're not the real thing, but you are the real thing.

[3 : 26] It can be a nice little cute little parallel, right? Knowing the difference between the real thing and something that's not the real thing, right? Aaron knew who his dad was and who he wasn't.

We're encouraged today as we're going to go in this message to be steadfast in prayer and watchful in seeking God's truth and ensuring that we run to the Father and that our relationship is to God who is our heavenly Father and not get distracted by fakes or phonies.

And I don't mean that in any offense to the gentleman that was that had some resemblance here, but not get distracted by lookalikes, right? And so together, we have learned so much about the book of Colossians.

It's kind of crazy to see that as you are opening your Bibles, you'll see here that we are getting so much closer to the end. This is the final instructions from the apostle Paul, right?

What have we learned about in Colossians? We have learned about how Colossae, the Colossian church, was a church that was faithful to God, to his word, and exhibited the love of Christ to others.

[4 : 43] Just that there is encouragement for us. I want this church and I hope that all churches should be faithful to the Lord, right? The truth of God's word and exhibit the love of Christ.

We've learned about how Christ is preeminent, that Jesus Christ is all that we need and is in everything. We've learned about the mystery of Christ being revealed, right, revealed in majesty, that salvation is available to all who believe.

And we learned about the warnings. We learned that you need to stay away from the things that distract you, the things that derail you or deter us from Christ, right?

Just like how my son, he recognized, that's not my real dad. Very similar parallel here. We focus on Christ. And there's also what we learned is, let no one disqualify us from the opportunity to know the Lord, to grow in him, and to be encouraged to do good in the name of Jesus Christ.

Let no one rob us from the opportunity. We learned about the importance of putting to death the former life and putting on the new life in Christ.

[6 : 04] When we believe in the Lord, it is the beginning. It is the beginning of our new life in Christ. And this last week, we went over how Paul, he spoke to wives and to husbands, to childrens, and to slaves and to masters, that all of them in knowing the Lord, transformation will come from God.

God will transform your life from the inside out to the point where we treat each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.

For there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free. We are all equal in the eyes of God. And this leads us to today, where we have these four verses that we're gonna go over.

Again, it's the final instruction and the guiding words from the apostle Paul. So let's start with that verse two here. The prayer of Thanksgiving.

It says here, continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with what? With Thanksgiving, right? From putting to death the former life and putting on the new self, we are called to be more Christ-like.

[7 : 18] In the family, in our home, in our very lives, we come to this part where the apostle Paul is reminding the Colossians that they need to continue in prayer.

And this is very connected with the very beginning of the letter, right? Where Paul was expressing how proud he was of the church. Remember, Paul was grateful for the Colossians for being faithful to God and exhibiting the love of Christ to others.

Paul is saying to continue steadfastly in prayer, we should know that prayer is such an essential, critical and important part of every season of life.

There is much power when we pray for one another, when we pray to the Lord. It is a way to continue to be connected to the Creator God, the one who formed you.

The Bible is full of verses that should encourage us to have a prayer life, right? Prayer should be integrated as a part of our lives to be constant in prayers and to not be anxious about anything.

[8 : 22] And there's the famous verse to pray without ceasing. And so the Colossians are from the apostle Paul here to continue in prayer and to be watchful.

Now that's an interesting word that we're seeing here, to be watchful, right? Be mindful, right? Be on alert, to be active, to be vigilant, right? Be careful and be alert or to be awake.

Be mindful of what's going on. Have you considered, have you thought recently of how God is interacting in your life? When you pray, do you listen for God's response?

Do you listen to how God will answer your prayers? It may not be immediately. Absolutely, there are many times that we pray and how often do we get prayers answered immediately? Sometimes we do and sometimes we don't.

Very often you'll see that when verses are saying to be watchful, it is merely being mindful, being aware. Be aware of what is going on in your life.

[9 : 19] Be aware of how God is working in your life and in the lives around you. It is being grateful towards God. There's a question that I wanna ask you here.

Have you reflected on your prayer life? How's your prayer life looking? How often do you pray? I know for myself personally, there are times I get so busy that I forget to pray and I feel bad. But prayer is something that is so important. It's just like when you're communicating with your friends or your families, communicating with the Lord.

It's so important for us. So in that question, be encouraged to be aware, to be watchful, right? And to have a heart of gratitude towards the Lord in your prayer life.

I find it very appropriate at times to just pray in thanksgiving, being thankful for the very life that you have. I know it sounds very simplistic and even childlike to be thankful for the day.

[10:23] This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Thank you for the sun and the air that I breathe. Thank you for this life that I have.

Are you thankful for that? Let this be an encouragement for you. You'll be surprised at how God will speak to you. And I think sometimes we get afraid.

We shouldn't be afraid of God answering our prayers or God speaking to us through his word or through other people. We then go into verse three, prayer for the opportunity to declare Christ.

The verse says 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.

So Paul continues. He's saying, yes, you should pray, you should be thankful, pray without ceasing, be mindful, be aware. But Paul is also requesting, he's instructing the Colossians and possibly the Laodiceans to pray for them.

[11:33] Paul is requesting for prayer and those who serve in ministry, absolutely. So what's the prayer request? It is that God will open the door, right, to declare the mystery of Christ and simply put, this is the opportunity to declare the good news of the gospel, right?

It's praying that that opportunity will be presented to itself, right? That the door will be open and that minds will receive it. Ears will hear it and hearts are ready for it.

It's the opportunity to proclaim the good news of the gospel. It's a very unique request, right? You're asking for the door to be open for the word? How often do you meet people who have hardened hearts or rejected minds?

How often do you know of people who they shut the door as it were to the Lord? What a wonderful prayer to ask that the door would be open for transformation, for divine intervention.

The opportunity for the word that is the word of God. And since Christ is no longer a hidden mystery, Christ is revealed in majesty.

[12:50] And very often, you know, when we're children, when we discover something, we learn how to build something. I can't help but think of my own children very often.

They want to figure out how to take things apart and put it back together and think of Legos or all these different toys. Very often you'll see that this toy just can't come off.

And they're asking for help, right? And very often when we're as children or you observe children or maybe you today, when we learn something new, when we discover something, don't we get excited when we discover something new?

When we learn something new or will we solve that problem? How many of you guys are math, love math, solving the formula, right? Finding the answer, right?

And in the same way, it's very common for us to wanna share our findings, that we solve the riddle, we solve the answer. And this is very similar with the apostle Paul wanting to declare the mystery of Christ.

[13:52] That salvation is available to both the Gentiles and the Jews. There is excitement in that. There is excitement in the apostle Paul wanting to declare Jesus Christ to the world.

And there should be excitement for us. The simplicity of the gospel. The saving grace that comes from the Lord. And when we think of the Gentiles and the Jews, the mystery being revealed, it's showing that in the scriptures that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of scripture.

To the Jewish people, it is that they're no longer under the old covenant of the law, but under the new covenant of grace. Can you imagine being a Jewish person and coming to know the Lord?

Coming to know, hey, look, I followed these laws and these rules and I was circumcised and I followed the dietary laws and all of these practices. And now there's Jesus that's saying, it's now believing in him, believing in the death burial and resurrection of Christ.

What a radical shift that must have been for the Jewish people. And let's not stop there to the Gentiles. People who didn't know about the Jewish faith, people who didn't even know Christ.

[15:06] Being revealed that salvation is available to all who believe. What do you mean by salvation? Well, the apostle Paul and for us, we know what salvation is. It is knowing that there is safety and security here in this life and in the next.

And that is an incredible promise from the Lord. Those who believe, they're saved by grace through faith. This is the new covenant.

And so the apostle Paul goes on to say on account, he's in prison because of the ministry that he's doing. Just as there were people who received and understood, wow, this is amazing.

I wanna follow Jesus Christ. There were people on the other side saying, I don't know about this Paul guy. I love the law. I'm not gonna follow Paul. I'm not gonna follow this Christ.

There's people who were against Paul. Right? Something to keep in mind. And a question that I wanna ask you is, do you pray for opportunities for the gospel to be shared?

[16:10] That should be a part of your prayer life. That Christ will be proclaimed, whether that's in the church or in the street, whether that's through your daily interactions, sharing in the good news of the gospel or sharing in the word of your testimony, be encouraged to share in the word of your testimony.

God works in every single one of our lives. For many of us, we may forget or we may remember what our life was like before we knew the Lord and oh, how God will transform our lives from the inside out.

Have you ever prayed that God will open a door for conversations about Christ? Have you ever prayed that the door will be opened to hardened hearts or hardened minds?

It's a wonderful prayer and I'm sure we can all agree that there's someone that we know who has a hardened heart, someone who may have bitterness, just like, well, think of how Paul was in prison, people who didn't like what was being proclaimed.

There were always going to be people who do not like Christianity or do not like the gospel. Pray for their heart, pray for their mind, pray for transformation that God will work in their lives, that they'll come to know the Lord.

[17:30] We now go to verse four. Make the message clear that I might make it confusing. Is that what it says? That I might make it what?

Clear, which is how I ought to speak. The apostle Paul is asking for prayer, right? The opening of the door, the opportunity that he can speak to the Jews and the Gentiles in such a way that the word is understandable.

It's understood to those who hear. And this is a great request from the apostle Paul. It should be a prayer for us that the word of God is proclaimed in such a way that it is easy to understand.

Are there complex things in the Bible? Absolutely. Have you read Revelation? Have you read the book of Isaiah or Jeremiah? There's a lot of confusing things about it, but here's the thing.

When we're talking about the security that comes from the Lord, simple. Believe in Jesus Christ. How often do we make things complicated?

[18:39] I might have mentioned it before, and if I haven't, I'll mention it now. How many of you know somebody who they have all this intelligence, this knowledge or degrees, and when they talk to you, they say all these words you don't understand.

And it's like they're trying to flex their muscles, their intellectual muscles as it were, right? They're trying to show how smart they are. And we tend to do that, right? Sometimes we take pride in what we do, and we know advanced theories and concepts, but we should not make the gospel complicated.

I mean, really, think of the thief on the cross. Jesus, remember me. And what did Christ say? You will be with me today in paradise.

That's pretty simple to me. That's not this overly complicated thing. And so what an incredible request that Paul can speak in such a way that is simple for people to understand.

It is directly applicable today for us to pray for those who minister, and even for us to be able to speak to other people. Let us speak in an easy to follow way.

[19:53] The word of God should be made clear in preaching and teaching, right? Let's not make it overly complicated. And like I said, how there are people who make things just everything overly complicated, right?

There's people who are going to make the gospel complicated. What Paul is saying here is, well, pray that I can preach the gospel simply, and you should too.

We should pray, and we should come to know how to share in our faith in such an easy way. And a question to ask yourself is, how can you share in the good news or your testimony with others in a simple way?

I could just be, I believe in Jesus Christ. I believe in the Bible. I believe what the word of God says. You know, in your notes here, in the back of your notes, it says here that the gospel message simplified in the scriptures.

And we're gonna turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 15 verses three to four. We'll have it on the screen. You know that the word of God has a real simple way that you can explain the gospel message here.

[20 : 59] Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures.

What a simple way of saying it. I believe that Christ lived, died, was buried, and on the third day he rose again. Do you believe that? Very simple. Some people have asked me before, what is a real easy way to present the gospel message?

That's a very good one. And on the bottom of your notes, John chapter six verse 47, truly I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. If you want a little more specifics, you turn here.

Very easy. Let's now go to verse five here. Reach out to outsiders, make the best use of time. It says to walk in foolishness, walk in wisdom.

Walk in wisdom towards outsiders, making the best use of time. The apostle Paul goes on to encourage the Colossians to walk in wisdom.

[22 : 01] It's speaking of the wisdom of God, the wisdom that is provided by the Lord. If you don't know, if you don't have wisdom, ask the Lord for wisdom.

The gospel should be proclaimed in a simple manner like I was saying, as we learn and as we grow understanding the Bible more, growing in our faith, we can share with that with others.

This wisdom also helps us become more like Christ. How many of you have known a Christian that the way that they live their life, there is something different about them.

The way they spoke to you. The way they were hospitable and they welcomed you in their home.

The way they lived their life, there was a peace to them. There was a joy to their life.

There was just something, you may not have put your finger on it, but there was something that was remarkable about them. Those people have a profound impact. Those are people who are walking in wisdom.

[22 : 57] Let this be an encouragement. As you learn and as you grow, there's a call for you to implement these things in your life and how you live your life.

People will see that. I once heard a famous quote from Dale Carnegie. I don't know, anyone know Dale Carnegie? Not personally, right? You might know the quote though, right?

It's a pretty good quote. Knowledge isn't power until it is applied, right? It's a pretty good quote here. It's very similar to what we're finding here in scripture, right?

Even the world understands the importance of action. You have all this knowledge implemented in your life. If you have the wisdom of God, implemented in your life, if you have the wisdom of God implemented in your life, isn't it fascinating when the world has a similarity like that?

We must believe in the Lord first and foremost, right? Come to know Him, grow in faith, and act upon this faith. God calls us to live out His wisdom so that we can show the light and the love and the truth of Christ to others.

[24 : 11] Consider the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 7, verse 24. Only tall people or everyone? Everyone.

Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the what? On the rock.

We are to walk towards those who are unsaved, right? Those who are unbelievers. We have our foundation in Jesus Christ, who is the rock of our salvation.

And we build upon our lives by putting in the plumbing, as it were, right? Putting on the infrastructure on that foundation. It's certainly a calling for us to take upon the indwelling of the Word, the wisdom of God, and go out and influence others for the cause of Christ.

What better use of our time is it than to go out and live out our faith? You can live out your faith in how you interact with people at your work. You can do this at your school.

[25 : 18] You can do this by the grocer at the grocery store. You know, I'll tell you a funny story here. The other day I was getting something to eat.

I was going through a drive-thru. And there was a gentleman there, not giving any names. It was his first job, and he kept getting the order wrong.

He gave me the wrong drink, the wrong order. And it was a test for me because, you know, you want to get out of there. And I remember the guy was saying, it's my first job and I got yelled at. And I remember I thought, you know what? Normally I get frustrated. We all do, right? But I felt compassion for him. And I actually told him, I said, you know what?

I like your attitude. You have a positive attitude. You apologized. You made it correct. And we moved on. Just in that small interaction.

[26 : 17] That's an example. That's an opportunity for how we can exhibit the love of Christ. How we can speak words of wisdom, encouraging words to others. I don't know if he's a believer.

I have no idea. But I'm hoping that my interaction with him will show the love of Christ. That it will show the wisdom. Right? Remember, patience is one of the things, the attributes of the new self. Well, what a great opportunity, right? When somebody gets your order wrong, right? Or when the machine goes down in the grocery store, right? When it says, see a attendant, right?

What better opportunity is it for us to live out our faith in our daily interactions? I'm not saying leave your job. I'm not saying change your course of study.

What I am saying is that in everything you do, you can integrate the life, the love, and the truth of Christ to others in your interactions with everyone.

[27 : 21] The days of our lives, they're all opportunities for us to live lives that glorify and honor God. And it's also to exhibit the new self to others.

I once heard, I don't know if it's a theologian or a pastor. If you find out who it is, let me know.

There's a famous saying out there, where it says the difference between life on earth and life in heaven is, you don't have the opportunity to share the gospel with others.

And to me, that was kind of sad, but encouraging at the same time. That every single day we have here on earth is an opportunity to share in the light, love, and truth of Christ.

And we don't have that when we're in heaven. So what an interesting thought. Every interaction.

Now, granted, we're not perfect, I know.

But it's that intentionality, right? It's being mindful of your interactions. And as we learned in Colossians, right? Believers are to become more holy.

[28 : 27] They're living the beloved life, showing kindness and compassion, humility, meekness, or gentle strength, patience, forgiveness, and love to others. I want to ask you this question.

Can you imagine, just for a moment, the profound impact that Christians, imagine that we as the church can have by living out the word. Just imagine one person who you can influence, one person that you interact with, that you can share the love of Christ with.

Living the word, just imagine for a moment. Because Christ calls for us to live and to love like Him. Just imagine if we actually all did that.

What kind of impact we can have on families, our friends, our community, even in this country. All of these qualities the world needs.

People crave something more to this life. People crave something more than the confusion, the superficial or the lower things of this world.

[29 : 32] People want to be a part of something greater than themselves. And where can they find that? They can find that in Jesus Christ. Not on this endless scrolling phone, we see post after post, or channel after channel when you're going through your television.

There's something that's constant. There's something that is everlasting, that never changes. And oh boy, do we need something that's constant in our life.

When the world, when culture changes. I don't even need to go into details because you all know what I'm talking about here.

People need hope in a world that seems to be hopeless. This world needs that. Ask yourself this question. Have you thought of how you can be active in the church and in the community?

Maybe you're doing that currently. Continue doing that. Maybe you haven't. Maybe it's time for you to start. There's so many ways that you can demonstrate Christ's love through what you say and what you do.

[30 : 37] Make every interaction count. Let us not be ashamed of the gospel. It is the power of God that brings salvation to all who believe.

Let us go now to verse six. Speak graciously with salt. And I didn't bring any visuals. I didn't bring a salt shaker or anything with that, you know.

Says, let your speech always be gracious seasoned with salt. So you may know how you ought to answer each person. Let us be encouraged to live this life for the Lord making the best use of our time.

Let the words that we say be filled with grace guided by the Holy Spirit. This speech is simply the words that we say to others. May we be empowered to speak truth but also do it in a loving way. We should speak truth simply and guided by the Holy Spirit. And if you don't know what to say, ask the Lord for guidance. God, I don't know how to talk to this person.

[31 : 45] I don't know what to say. I don't know how to say it. Perhaps it's a call for you to ask for that guidance. And I love the language that the Apostle Paul uses about speech being seasoned with salt.

When I think of seasoning, I think of a grilled chicken, you're adding a little salt, or maybe you made some fresh French fries, or maybe you have a steak or whatever, and you put some salt on that. I know I'm thinking of grilling, Dads.

Some good grilling language, some grilled chicken or steak or hamburgers, whatever. You want to have that nice seasoning on it. But this is a reference of how Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount, he said, the disciples, you are the salt of the earth.

And the implication is that we are to have the wisdom of God when we speak. But it should also be filled with flavor and engaging with others, right?

You don't want to have a dull conversation. I believe in the Lord. No, you got to have some emphasis, right? Not to say that none of you all talk that way.

[32 : 53] I hope you don't. And I hope I haven't. But really, just have some flavor. It's what this verse is encouraging us, right? Let our interactions with others not be dead and dull, but full of life.

Even if you speak in a monotone voice, let it be full of life. And what a direct application and encouragement to our own lives, but our message and our interactions with others should focus on the grace that is supplied by God and that there is salvation in knowing the Lord.

It is grace over judgments. Now, many of you know, there are some churches that are focused on the wrath of God, the judgment and the condemnation of others.

And certainly there is there are verses that speak about this. There are pastors that preach about this. There's certainly a balance of knowing about what happens when you don't know the Lord.

That like we've gone over in Colossians, the ones who mistreat others. That there is wrath that comes to evil doers. But certainly there's also a time for us to proclaim the hope that comes through Christ, to proclaim the good news of the gospel.

[34 : 07] And our mission is to proclaim the good news. We should encourage people to have a relationship with the Lord, to live for the Lord and to belong.

Be a part of the body of Christ, the community. We're all on this journey together in Christ. Come to the Lord and begin your journey in Christ.

Let God change your life. Let God transform your life. I've heard it said before come as you are and remain as you are. And I don't agree with that statement.

Come as you are and let God work in and through you. Let God transform your life. You will be amazed how God will transform you.

When we interact with others, we should share the message of the hope in God. We should share this message of salvation that is available in Christ, sharing the inspiration, the transformation, the restoration and the renewal that comes from the Lord.

[35 : 09] We should be engaging culture, right? Not having boring interactions, but interactions that are full of life, truth and encouragement.

I'm not saying be fake and in sincere mind you. I'm saying be real and authentic, right? Be honest with others. Be yourself when you interact with others.

Do you realize, look, you don't have to be perfect for God, right? So when you interact with others, you have to be perfect in your speech, right? Absolutely not. Just be real.

Just having real, authentic, genuine conversations. Believe in the Lord, grow in him and do good, right? And in the doing, the living out of your faith, do everything in excellence for the Lord.

And in this final part of the verse, we're told that we should walk in wisdom, have this grace filled speech seasoned with salt, and that we should know how to answer each person.

[36 : 10] When you become a Christian, right? You should learn the basics of the faith and you grow building on that foundation on the rock of our salvation.

I can guarantee you there will come a time when someone will ask, what do you believe in? Why do you believe in this? Can you explain your faith? Can you answer others who ask those kind of questions?

So here it's an encouragement and it certainly can be a challenge for us to, how do we interact with people? It's okay to ask God for that wisdom and how to speak to someone who may have a question for you.

There are so many people that have so many questions. It's okay to answer them. And it's okay to say, you know what? I don't know this answer.

There have been times people have stumped me with questions and said, you know what? I don't know. But the end of the day, having faith in Christ is, that's really all that matters.

[37 : 12] I don't know the exact day when the tribulation will happen. I don't know who the anti-Christ is. I don't. I mean, I don't know if I want to know, to be quite honest.

But at the end of the day, it's knowing the Lord and knowing that God's transforming me. And ask yourself this question. Are you ready to answer and testify about the love and salvation of God in these questions?

Understand the heart of who's asking. Sometimes people will come to you and actually they will.

Okay, Jesus, I thought he was just a, I thought he just had long hair and he walked with sandals in the desert.

Let that be an opportunity if they're sincere about it, not being facetious, right? Yeah. Jesus is more than a teacher. He's the savior.

What does that mean? Well, show them the word. It's an opportunity to let the word of God speak for itself. Say, this is what I believe.

[38 : 20] He was buried and he rose again. It's just like in your notes. Did you know that Isaiah 53 verse nine? We don't have to turn there, but Joseph of Arimathea was prophesied about that there would be a rich man who wasn't known for violence.

It was fulfilled in Matthew 27 verses 57 through 60. Is that remarkable? You know, but anyways, going back first Peter chapter three verse 15, it's very similar to what we're seeing here in Colossians here.

In your hearts, honor Christ, the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for the reason for the hope that is in you. Do it with gentleness and respect.

No, respect. Keep you on your toes, right? And this is similar again to what we're finding in Colossians. There is an importance in these verses to be ready, right?

To be ready to defend the faith, but ready to explain, sharing your faith with others. We have to be prepared to answer people to the best of our ability. It's not to say that we should know everything, but people will see, they will hear, and they will learn that Christians have, there's something different about them.

[39 : 47] That there's something, think of the perspective of someone who doesn't know the Lord. You should be angry at this, but you're not.

How are you still filled? You're still happy? You call it joy? And yet when something bad happens to me, I fall apart. You know, it's just all these things that happen in our walk with the Lord that people will notice.

So again, people will see how you live your life, hear the words that you say and learn. They should learn that Christians, we have hope within us that we are a new creation, especially when we've put on the new self.

This world needs light, love, and truth, and they need salt. Let us never be afraid of living out our faith and speaking to others and sharing in the hope of Jesus Christ.

The question then comes, have you thought about the words that you say to others? Something to think about. Let your words, much like your actions, be filled with the goodness of God.

[40 : 55] Let your words be filled with grace and truth. Be encouraged to engage with others in meaningful and encouraging conversations. Ask God for strength, wisdom, and the right words to say.

And I want you to think of someone that you can talk to about your faith, your words, your response, your actions. They all can have a profound impact on someone's life.

Think of all the interactions you've had before you became a Christian. I'm sure for many of us, we have some remarkable stories about how someone influenced us, that they exhibited the light, love, and truth of the Lord, and they influenced you in the same way that many of us have been influenced.

We can influence others, showing that it's not about me. It's about Christ. Look at how Christ has worked in my life. The Lord can work in you as well.

And that is why here at Ontario Community Church, we have our mission and vision. Encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. That we encourage people to believe in the Lord.

[42 : 11] We encourage people to know that they're not alone in this life. That they belong to the Lord and to the body of Christ and that salvation is free to all who believe. We equip people to grow in their faith and through their walk with the Lord and through the word of God.

It is growing as a child to the man or the woman in the Lord. Who does God want you to be? It is becoming the person that God wants you to be.

Do you realize that you have potential and purpose in the eyes of God? There is potential that exists in you and purpose for this life in the Lord growing him.

And we engage lives for Christ through service, serving others in the ministry and in community. I want us to keep in mind that we are all seen as equal in the eyes of God.

We are all made for more than this life. The superficial, the lower things or the confusion of this world. We are made to have a relationship with Jesus Christ and to be transformed from the inside out.

[43 : 22] We are all given time, talents, and treasures in which we can use to steward but also minister to others. Do you realize that we are all called into ministry in some capacity?

To help one another. Maybe it's just by having conversations and visiting people. Maybe it's by prayer and what we'll find next week in our closing of Colossians will find that God calls everyday people for extraordinary purpose.

Everyday people from the farmer to the guy on Wall Street. Right from short and tall, black or white, whatever.

God calls all of us for extraordinary purpose. And as believers were called to minister to others to share the gospel of Christ and to be doers of the word.

This is a call for all of us. We are called to live lives faithful to God to his word and like the Colossians exhibit the love of Christ. And just like how Paul called the Colossians to continue what they were doing.

[44 : 37] Paul was grateful for their faithfulness and love. Let us be encouraged by this book of the Bible. Right. It's not about who can serve the Lord, but how we all can serve the Lord and be active in our faith every day.

And as Christians, we can live out our faith by allowing God to work in and through us. Let us place God at the center of our lives, whether it's in our home, where we work or in our community, we're called to be ambassadors for Christ.

Let us be encouraged by these verses from Paul. Let us pray without ceasing. Let us ask the Lord to provide opportunities to open the door to share the gospel and to live wisely to those who are in darkness.

Our foundation is in Christ and we build our house upon the rock in Jesus Christ, our salvation. Let us be faithful to God and live out the love of Christ through what we say and what we do.

Let's pray together. And gracious Father, we thank you for your word and the truth that is spoken here. It is the truth that sets us free. This truth will help us come to know you, grow in you and do good in your name.

[45 : 57] We're grateful that we can come together, sing praises and hear from your word. Teach us how to be steadfast in our prayer. May we be watchful and may we be thankful.

We pray that you will give us opportunities and pray for opportunities to share in the good news of your son, Jesus. Teach us to live wisely to those who do not know you and help give us the right words to speak with grace and truth.

May we be encouraged to live in love like you. And may we all be encouraged to minister to those in need, in the church and in the community.

It is in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen. Thank you for tuning in to the Ontario Community Church sermon podcast. For more about our church and how you can get involved or support our mission, please visit ontariocommunitychurch.org. May God's blessings be with you.