

Colossians: Identity in Christ
Lesson 9 “Lifestyle of a Christian”

I. Review

A. Background - Last week we began studying the book of *Colossians*, which was a letter Paul wrote to the church in Colossae when he was imprisoned in Rome in 62 A.D.

1. Paul did not found this church. It was founded by one of his disciples, Epaphrus (who was from Colossae). He met Paul in the revival in Ephesus (which lasted from 52-55 A.D) and then he moved back to start a church and bring the hope of Jesus to his community.

2. Paul wrote this letter from Rome to strengthen this church and deal with some issues this church was facing. The main issue was **syncretism**, which is the mixing the worship of Jesus Christ with beliefs, values, practices, or worldviews that compete with Him.

a. In that day - legalism, gnosticism, mysticism, folk superstition, angel worship, and asceticism.

b. In our day - consumerism, politics, psychology, self-help, new age, and modern cultural values (ex: marriage) so Christianity is diluted.

c. Last week, in *Colossians 3:18-4:1* Paul showed us that our identity in Christ is meant to transform everyday life—marriage, parenting, work, leadership, and relationships. No matter our role, we all live under the Lordship of Jesus and are called to represent Him well in the earth. B.

B. Tonight, in *Colossians 4:2-6*, Paul shifts into the overall lifestyle of a believer—a life of prayer, wisdom, grace, to influence the world around us.

II. Lifestyle of a Christian

A. Definition of a Christian - The word “Christian” was first given to believers in Antioch in **Acts 11:26**: “And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.”

The word literally means “little Christ” or “Christ-like one.” Most scholars believe the term “Christian” was first given by outsiders in Antioch—likely Romans or the Greek-speaking population of the city—not by believers themselves. This term was given because these believers talked like Jesus, acted like Jesus, loved like Jesus, and carried His message everywhere they went.

At first, it may have even been used mockingly—“There go those little Christs acting like Jesus.” But that was exactly the point. These believers represented Jesus so strongly people couldn’t separate them from Him.

B. Colossians 4:2-6

1. **Verse 2** The only way to continue something is to have first begun it. Ex: **Acts 1:12-14**.
 - a. **Matthew 7:7-8** The verb tense in these verses is continuous - **AMP**.
 - b. Elijah illustration - **1 Kings 18:41-45** Prayed through til breakthrough.
 - c. While we are to make requests of God, our prayer life needs to be more than making requests. It should also be worship and thanksgiving.
Side note: Once our prayer shifts from asking to thanksgiving it is a sign are abounding in faith. Ex: Clara Pickney story
2. **Verse 3** One of the things Paul says to pray for is a door to be opened for him so he could speak the word about the mystery of Christ. Ex: **This is what God did when the apostles prayed in Acts 1**.
 - a. What did they pray specifically? They could have prayed many things, but would have definitely prayed 3 **Psalms** the Jews historically prayed during Pentecost. One of which is **Psalms 104**.
 - b. **Psalms 104:1-4** fulfilled in **Acts 2:1-4 (Hebrews 1:7)** angels were **spirits (winds)** and flames of fire that filled the upper room as the Apostles prayed.
 - c. **Psalm 104** indicates God stretched at the heavens and moved His world here - This opened a door for Peter to preach and teach the mystery of Christ and 3,000 people got saved.
 - d. In context of these verses, Paul asked for prayer for the open door when he was imprisoned in Rome between A.D. 60-62. The prayer worked because he was eventually released and continued to preach.
3. **Verse 4** Make manifest - **phanerōō**, fan-er-o'-o; from **G5318**; to render apparent - Paul was asking for the wisdom to make the mystery of Christ clear to those He was communicating to.
 - a. For example, someone may think Christianity is just rules, religion, and trying harder to be good. But when they encounter the real Jesus—His love, grace, peace, power, and kindness—suddenly Christ becomes manifest to them. They're no longer just hearing about religion; they're beginning to see Jesus.
 - b. My phone center scapegoat example. Revealed Jesus to the person I was ministering through this illustration. This was spirit led.
4. **Verse 5** Wisdom buys back time. What are things we spend? Money, energy, time. What are things we waste? Money, energy, time? Wisdom redeems money, energy, and time through proper stewardship of life. Ex: People who say they don't have time to do something God told them to do? They are not spending their time properly. Sometimes we have to spend money to redeem time. Wisdom shows when.
 - a. Time - **Kairos - occasion, i.e. set or proper time:—opportune time**.
 - b. Not only does wisdom buy back time, it also brings us into season of opportunity. Ex: Purchasing this building. Previous church was Kairos Community Church.
5. **Verse 6** Our words are always supposed to be full of grace (divine influence/

empowerment). We have to let it be this way. It's not automatic.

a. Seasoned with salt. Salt is symbolic of wisdom. Wisdom both preserves and flavors. As Christians we are both the preserving force of the kingdom of God on earth, but we are also to add flavor (make better) the world around us.

b. Ex of salt: Christians started schools and hospitals in this country which made the nation better. Our speech/advice when we answer people should do the same, but we must remember to not give too much salt. Some salt is good, too much harms people.

- III. Conclusion - These verses reveal Christianity is not just a belief system—it's a lifestyle. As we stay rooted in prayer, dependent on the Holy Spirit, and led by God's wisdom, the way we speak, live, and treat people should make Christ visible to the world around us. People shouldn't just hear about Jesus from us—they should begin to see Him through us.

IV. Discussion Questions

1. What was your top takeaway?
2. What does it practically look like to represent Jesus well in everyday life?
3. Why do you think Paul emphasized prayer, wisdom, and gracious speech as part of the Christian lifestyle?
4. What are some things people commonly spend or waste their time, energy, attention, and focus on that pull them away from God's purpose?
5. Paul prayed for the ability to make Christ "manifest" and clear to others. What are practical ways we can reveal the real Jesus to people around us?
6. If people around you only judged Christianity based on your everyday life, what picture of Jesus would they see?