

The Hope of Glory:

An Exposition of Colossians

November 22, 2020

Sermon 16: Work and the Hope of Glory
Colossians 4:2-6

Opening Point: Have you ever really wanted to share the gospel with someone, and you were waiting for an opening to introduce Jesus to the conversation, and for whatever reason, it just felt awkward? Ex #1—obvious and laborious conversation transitions: “It sure is hot out today!” Ex #2—Jehovah’s Witnesses at the door.

Our theme for Colossians 3: *The relationships of our lives express our conviction for our hope of glory.*

Last week, we focused on the family relationship. This week we will talk about prayer and preaching to/for people.

I. Introduction/Review

A. In prayer, we bring the needs of people before God.

1. We lift up their needs, concerns, etc.

B. In preaching, we bring the greatness of God before people.

1. We tell them what they need and how they might obtain it.

II. Prayer and the Hope of Glory—Colossians 4:2-4

A. Be devoted to prayer (v. 2a)

1. What does this mean?
 - a. This means that prayer is not simply a Christian duty.
 - b. Instead, prayer is meant to be a lifestyle, a consistent practice.

Point: Is prayer something that you are really devoted to? Is it something you dabble with? Is prayer something that makes you feel awkward?

2. What does this require?
 - a. Faith—John 4:10 Matthew 21:22
 - b. Diligence—Luke 18:1 and ff.
 - c. Discipline—Ephesians 6:18

B. Be watchful in prayer (v. 2b)

1. What does this mean?
 - a. Be watchful for what you should be praying for.
 - b. Be watchful for how God answers those prayers.
2. What does this require?
 - a. Praying for specific things (more on this later).
 - b. Remembering what you prayed.
 - c. Expecting that prayer will be answered.

Quote: “He that is more frequently in his pulpit to his people, then he is in his closet for his people, is but a sorry watchman.” –John Owen

C. Be thankful in prayer (v. 2c)

1. What does this mean?
 - a. Notice what Paul says, “with an attitude of Thanksgiving.”

b. Regardless of the answer to your prayer, be thankful.

Point: Do you really believe that God wants what is best for you? Do you really believe that He knows what He is doing? If we believe that about Him, we must be thankful, whether He says Yes or No to our requests.

ILL: Job managed to praise God, even though he had no idea what God was doing? Even though his pleas to God for went unanswered, Job 1:21 says this, “21 He said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD." Can **YOU** say this?

2. What does this require?
 - a. Humility
 - b. Devotion
 - c. Trust
 - d. Submission

D. Be strategic in prayer (v. 3)

1. What does this verse say?
 - a. Pray for us
 - b. That we would have an opportunity to speak.
 - i. Specifically, that God would open a door to speak.

ILL: The best times to witness are when God is obviously opening a door. I wish there were more times like this in my life. Maybe there would be if I prayed for that God would grant me these opportunities. Ex: Eric Mathis.

2. What does this mean?
 - a. Pray as if you were trying to accomplish something by it, because you are!
 - b. Pray as if you were relying on God to do something for you, because you are!
3. What does this require?
 - a. Thought
 - b. Patience
 - c. Time
 - d. Faithfulness

E. Be specific in prayer (v. 4)

1. What does this mean?
 - a. There is one desire that rises above every other desire here—Clarity!
 - i. Please pray for me for clarity.
 - ii. Paul’s (and my) goal in presenting the gospel is not profundity, it is clarity.

Quote: We do not have to re-interpret the Christian gospel but to reassert the gospel clearly and truly, believing it fully ourselves. This may not, of course, bring the results hoped for, because the hearers may not want to accept the gospel, and this is a problem which we must take to God in prayer. *D. B. Knox sent by Jesus page 33*

Point: If you leave here this morning mystified by what I was talking about, that can be only for the following reasons: Either (a) you were not paying attention, (b) I was boring or (c) I was unclear.

2. What does this require?

III. Preaching and the Hope of Glory—Colossians 4:5-6

A. Be wise in preaching.

1. We must be devoted to accuracy.
 - a. An easily digested poison is still POISON. We have to tell the truth!

ILL: Much of what passes for Christianity in this culture is really something else. It is really psychology, self-help, morality, whatever. That will always appeal to more individuals in a fallen and depraved culture. Don't assume because somebody has 50,000 people listening to him, that he is worth listening to.

2. We must be concerned with effectiveness.
 - a. The message doesn't change, but the methods might.
 - b. We must not be RULED by external effectiveness, but we must be concerned with it.
 - i. We cannot become mere pragmatists, but we must be open to reasonable discussions of effectiveness.
 - ii. Otherwise, we become slaves to the past and ineffectual for the future.

ILL: IFCA meeting: "We don't... and we don't...and we only have 6 people in church!" I think I know why.

B. Be gracious in preaching.

1. Seek to be a salty speaker!
 - a. Don't be THAT GUY! We have all known pushy, arrogant, guilt-tripping, manipulative, falsely pious Christians. Don't be that guy!

ILL: Witnessing to a drunk English man on the DC Metrorail. I was reading my Greek New Testament and just waiting for an opportunity. The Lord gave me one.

IV. Conclusions

A. How is your prayer life?

1. Do you feel like you pray enough?
2. Do you feel like you pray effectively?
3. What will we do?!?

B. How is your preaching life?

1. Do you feel like you witness enough?
2. Do you feel like you witness effectively?
3. What will we do?!?

"May I live daily under those inward teachings of the Spirit that enable me to speak from the heart to the heart, from the conscience to the conscience, and from experience to experience. Let me be a burning and a shining light." –Thomas Brooks