

Walking in Wisdom

Colossians 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving;

Colossians 4:3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned;

Colossians 4:4 that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.

Colossians 4:5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.

Colossians 4:3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also (along with teaching this mystery of Christ) I have also been imprisoned

We studied this in our study in Acts. How Paul was first imprisoned because of the religious leaders in Jerusalem, who really wanted him to

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be executed. But, so far, God has protected Paul. Paul is chained to a Roman soldier. In fact, he was chained to various members of the Praetorian guard for a little over two years. Paul uses the *intensive perfect tense* which could read: for two years I have been chained to a guard. The *passive voice* here means that Paul received being chained to a Roman soldier. And the *indicative mood* tells us his imprisonment is an historical fact. This is Paul's first imprisonment.

Colossians 4:4 that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.

That. Introduces a purpose clause, a clarification on his prayer request. Sometimes it is helpful to be specific in your prayer request to others.

that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak. I suppose this is a prayer request of every pastor-teacher or should be! The verb means to make something clear or make something understood by teaching. We have all had in our education, teachers who not only did not make it clear but actually caused us to be confused. Now, here is the point. Not every pastor-teacher is everyone's pastor-teacher. Hopefully, you can find one who makes the Bible clear to you, makes what the passage is teaching clear to you, challenging to you, not confusing, and not boring and certainly not erroneous. But even in his repetition causes you to learn or remember the doctrine.

That I may make it clear. This *pronoun* is used to emphasize identity. And that which is being identified here is teaching of the Word of God, specifically the mystery of Jesus Christ.

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Pray that I may make the mystery of Jesus Christ clear and understandable in the way I ought to speak. This is a particle of responsibility: Every pastor teacher has a definite responsibility. You want to know what the responsibilities of a pastor-teacher are, when you are looking for a pastor-teacher to sit under or to head a church? Well, here is one thing: *he ought to speak so that the truth of Scripture can be understood.*

in the way I ought to speak. The verb means to communicate information. And here that information is: the Word of God, namely – contextually—the mystery of Christ.

In other words, the apostle Paul requests prayer that even in chains he may stay on course as to his purpose for living. It is very easy for a man with the gift of pastor-teacher to get off course, to be distracted from what he ought to be doing. This means there is a constant necessity for believers to be in prayer for him. That he will not be distracted, that he will stay the course. Or, to add from our study in 1 Corinthians chapter 3, that he will continue teaching *gold, silver and precious stones* and not get involved in wood or hay or straw, non-important issues. Pastors can be distracted by the physical needs of people in the assembly. This is why others in the assembly need to step up and serve. Or a pastor can be distracted by gimmicks or building programs etc. He must stay the course. This requires prayer from thoughtful believers.

Verse five addresses the crisis that we are in, in the history of the Church-Age.

Colossians 4:5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. (Here I much prefer the King James:) ***walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.***

This is where we are in history today. This is the crisis of history that we live in. There are so many evil things that are happening as we move towards the end times of the Church Age. Why do you think there is a movement toward a One World Government? And a One World Religion? Yes, this is prophesied in Scripture in the book of Revelation, namely chapter 13. But, think about this: they (those used by Satan) have convinced most of the world that there are three main causes of war:

- 1) Conflicts between nations,
- 2) Conflicts between religions and
- 3) Economic needs

Be an historian and examine wars throughout history and indeed they are between nations—borders, resources, for economic reasons or for just the sake of ruling more of the world. Then there are the multitude of wars that are because of religion, peoples' spiritual or ideological, mystical beliefs. So, if we agree that war is horrible and needs to be stopped then what is the natural solution?

One World Government, so there will be no wars between nations.

World Religion, so there would be no fighting between peoples' beliefs.

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And a massive redistribution of wealth and a control over keeping everyone virtually equal in economic status. This is realized in the Mark of the Beast for any economic transaction. It should be noted that One World Government and One World Religion were first proposed at the Tower of Babel in Genesis chapter 11. We could also begin with President Wilson (One of the top three worst Presidents in US history from the standpoint of Freedom and the Constitution of the USA.). President Wilson wanted the League of Nations, which was the foundation of One World Government. But it did not come about until after World War II. Then came into being the UN.

Now, let's look at One World Government. Here we go to the UN which by the way is in New York city. The UN has several committees working on a One World government which it hopes to have in place by the end of 2030.

However, they realize that one of the big oppositions to One World Government (besides Trump) is religion. Therefore, there is a consolidated effort to move to a One World Religion. Satan, the great Dragon of Revelation chapter 13 will bring forth the first Beast, that is the dictator of the Revived Roman Empire to rule over the One World Government. And then, the second beast, the false Prophet to head the One World Religion. We are seeing the development of these two entities (One World Government—globalization and One World Religion) right now in our midst. Satan is bringing about the One World Religion by working at it from many different directions.

For example, the Roman Catholic Church has been sponsoring a One World religion for many decades. Pope Pius XII (pope from 1939-1958)

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strongly supported the formation of one world government. The next pope, Pope John XXIII (pope from 1958-1963) called for world government so there would be 'peace on earth.' Do away with the three causes of war: nationalism, religion and economics. He clothed his scheme under the banner of 'universal common good.' Then came Pope Paul VI (pope from 1963-1978) who strongly advocated a One World Government under the banner 'development of the peoples of the world.'

Next, we have one of the mysteries of the Roman Catholic Church: Pope John Paul I died after just 33 days. There are many who believe that he was assassinated because he was not for a one world government but for strong Roman Catholic doctrines. Then came Pope John Paul II (1978-2005). He was the youngest Pope in 154 years; first non-Italian in 455 years and the first pope from a Communist country-Poland. He continually advocated that Communism works under his system. He was very anti-Semitic and called for peace in the Middle East at Israel's expense. He worked for a New World order. Next came Pope Benedict XVI (2005-2013). He resigned, which was rarely done in Roman Catholic Church history. He worked to reform the UN to give it 'teeth' to implement a One World Government. He was the first to lay out the need for One world government to control the economy, military size; food security around the world, protection of the environment and regulation of migrants. The current pope, Pope Francis has embraced Protestants, Muslims and Communist declaring we all worship the same God. Why all this interest on these popes? Good question: we must understand that to the rest of the world, the Pope speaks for all Christianity. Of course, it does not, but he is listened to by the world.

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Another front is within Protestants themselves under the flag of ‘ecumenicalism’ which is the promotion of ‘unity’ among Christian denominations. The objective here is for all Protestant denominations to just set aside differences like who is Jesus Christ? What is the way of salvation, sola scripture etc. and just get along. Many Protestants are joining in this movement. But how are they going to put a stop to those of us who will not compromise our beliefs about the Bible, the cross work of Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ Himself, and salvation?

How indeed?

First of all, a strong movement of ecumenicalism. In 1961, Pope John XXIII actively started an ecumenical movement, inviting Protestants *back* to the mother church. One major step was the joining together of the Lutherans and Catholics and coming to an agreement on the doctrine of Justification by Faith. And Oh, they did this on 31 Oct. 1999—the 482nd anniversary of Luther nailing his 95 theses to the door at Wittenberg. To them, the Reformation was over. But, don’t you believe it. The Roman Catholic Church signed the document saying they agreed with Justification by Faith. But, if you dare work your way through this agreement, it is a cleverly worded theological document that defends the false Catholic gospel which depends on the sacraments. Justification to the Catholics involves sacraments, membership in the Roman Catholic Church, works and baptism. Joel Osteen met with Pope Francis and declared they were of the same faith. Rick Warren and James Robinson and Kenneth Copeland all met with Pope Francis to find areas of agreement and movement together.

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Another way of taking care of those who insist on biblical truth, is by imposing something that most of the world has already agreed upon after World War II. That is against ‘genocide.’ To come straight to the point, The New Encyclopedia Britannica, volume 5 on page 183 in the discussion of ‘genocide’ defines genocide in part with this statement: “Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of a group.” This is now being interpreted and applied to Christians who tell others that homosexuality is against the Word of God. You may cause them mental harm. Or if you tell someone that only those who believe in Jesus Christ are going to spend eternity in heaven with God and all others will spend eternity in a lake of fire, you will cause them mental harm, and so you must be ‘shut up.’ There are also movements in America to make any such teaching a ‘hate crime’ And if you don’t think this is going to happen, just study the Equality Act which is a bill before the Congress today. It is nothing more or less than trying to put an end to Biblical design of male and female and many other Christian beliefs from the Word of God.

Another front being used to shut down the teaching of the Word of God is ‘religious exclusiveness.’ Even though Jesus declared that ‘whosoever will’ is all inclusive, the fact that only those who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior have eternal life with God is exclusiveness and must be stopped. Gorbachev authored a book entitled *Perestroika* = **the policy or practice of restructuring or reforming the economic and political system**. In it he says that all religious exclusiveness must be extirpated [destroyed or exterminated]. He further wrote that ‘religious exclusiveness is equal to genocide.’ Communism has tried to end

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Christianity from its beginning. Only now they are doing it on a world platform.

How are we to handle a society quickly headed toward Armageddon? How are we to answer Muslims? Pleads to ecumenicalism? Or to One World Government...One World Religion?

Colossians 4:5 begins to answer this question for us.

walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Please note, this is in two parts: walk in wisdom toward them that are without and then redeeming time.

Walk. This is a *present active imperative*. We started off with *present active imperative*: **devote yourselves to prayer**. Don't stop doing this. Being devoted to prayer goes along with **walking in wisdom**. The verb *to walk* is used figuratively here referring to how you live each step of the way. And of course, context addresses very difficult decisions Christians must make all the time especially today. The *present tense* refers to the life style of the Christian which is absolutely different from anyone and everyone else. The *active voice* places you under pressure. This is a decision that every believer must make throughout the day. And Oh, yes, the *imperative mood*. Remember the *imperative mood* does not mean that you can do this. In fact, you cannot do this in the flesh. This is stated in the *imperative mood* for two primary reasons: first, so that we will know what God's desire is for us. And secondly, so that we will know that we must rely by faith on the Holy Spirit to fulfill this *imperative mood*.

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This word is used four times in the book of Colossians. each time it has a different emphasis.

1st In chapter 3, verse 7, it is used to show how we walked, lived as unbelievers:

Colossians 3:7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.

and in them. Sinful life for which the wrath of God will come upon the Earth.

you also once walked, when you were living in them. As unbelievers. We will see that it is wisdom not to ‘fellowship’ with unbelievers who are under the wrath of God.

2nd In chapter 1 it is used to encourage us how we are to walk now that we are believers in Jesus Christ. This passage will be very important in understanding our passage in Colossians 4:5.

Colossians 1:9 For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask **that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,**

Colossians 1:10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

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3rd The very important use of this verb ‘to walk’ is used in chapter 2 to explain **how** we are to be Filled with the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 2:6 Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,

We received Christ Jesus by grace through faith, so now we receive the power and leading of the Holy Spirit by grace through faith.

4th And now we come to our passage in Colossians 4:5 where it is used to describe how we are to live in a world that is turning more and more against God and His Word.

Colossians 4:5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.

Summary:

Colossians 3:7 we walked as unbelievers

Colossians 1:9 we are to walk a new way now that we are in Christ

Colossians 2:6 we are to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit by faith

Colossians 4:5 we are to walk in wisdom toward those who are without

Walking is a perfect figure because nearly everyone does it. However, doing it and understanding it are two different things. Those who walk learned to walk before they were aware of mechanical issues involved in walking. We do not even begin to realize all that is involved in walking.

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The people who really understand how important certain procedures are in walking are those who have to learn to walk all over again. My good friend John Hintz had a major motor cycle accident. Among other things he had to have a new hip replacement. This caused him to have to learn to walk all over again. That, which most of us take for granted is not that easy. Therefore, this makes a perfect example of living the Spirit-Filled Life. The secret to walking is found in energy plus balance.

In natural or literal walking you are getting from one place to another. You are moving forward. In spiritual walking YOU ARE ADVANCING IN THE Plan of God FOR YOUR LIFE. As we will see in the spiritual realm it will come to refer not only to the individual steps that we take day in and day out but to the course of life, the direction of our lives.

MECHANICS OF WALKING

Principle: Walking is almost an instinct, an obvious process of life.

Principle: The mechanics of walking involves recovery of balance. This is one of the first things you learn when you are learning to walk all over again. You quickly learn about balance. Man, Homo Sapiens is a biped, two footed; and this means that man is *off balance* for a second when he walks.

Every time you take a step you are OFF BALANCE for a second. This is why if you are not sure, stepping, you will fall or if someone pushes you just right you will fall. So walking is a series of being off balance. To recover your balance you place the other foot out in front of the other.

Principle: The believer is off balance because we live in Satan's world and possess an Inherited Sin Nature (ISN). But the believer recovers and

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is stabilized by putting his foot down. This is faith recovery, where the Holy Spirit gives or maintains our balance.

There are three mechanics of walking.

ENERGY plus MOTION plus BALANCE

ENERGY: You need energy to walk, power. In the physical analogy we eat and sleep, (and exercise) to have the power to walk. Question: "too tired to walk?" This often happens in the Christian life when believers do not take in the Word of God. In the spiritual realm the believer needs energy or power and our power source is the Filling of the Holy Spirit. There is no walking, no movement what so ever if you are not empowered by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives the believer the power, the energy to walk in a manner pleasing to the Lord.

MOTION. Motion denotes two very important principles of walking:

First: Volition. The believer must have a desire to walk worthy of the Lord.

Secondly: Direction. Direction is the whole objective of this study. Walk in a direction that is worthy of the Lord or that is in a direction of wisdom. Direction has everything to do with all the decisions you make in your life. Marriage is made in view of the direction of your life. And I might add here, that if you are of the age of marriage, dating must also be in the direction of your life as unto the Lord: the choice of the local church you will attend.

All these and many more are made on the basis of where you see yourself going and who you are in this world. In what direction you are going?

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Pay close attention. Are you going in the direction of the world or in the direction of pleasing Christ? You cannot do both. Self-gratification or pleasing to Christ. You make decisions of your walk as to where you desire to arrive. For too many people this is nothing more than getting along with the world. To others, it is to please Christ. It is so very important in Divine Guidance to know the will of God for your life. This is involved in establishing your goals in life, the direction you desire to make.

Direction: The direction you wish to go determines decisions, big or small you make daily in your life.

For example, many pastors and Christians have to decide if they desire unity at any cost or if they decide to stay with the Word of God.

BALANCE: That which stabilizes your life. The application here is two-fold:

First: For **BALANCE**, you need to keep moving in that predetermined direction. Believers lose balance when they are walking in a manner worthy of the Lord and then change direction right in the middle of a step. First in balance is continual movement in direction.

Secondly: Doctrine in the soul gives balance to your life.

Therefore, in the analogy, you decide your direction, and start walking. You put one foot out in front of you. And immediately you are off balance, therefore vulnerable. So, you quickly move the other foot out in front to recover balance. Continual motion is the key. This momentum gives balance and stability to your life. Later, you are able to walk or march in line with the Holy Spirit. (Gal. 5:25).

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Walking is used in the Word of God to describe the pattern of life. Of great importance in the Bible is the power source you choose for walking.

WALK ACCORDING TO THE FLESH,

or

WALK ACCORDING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

You choose each day your power source and direction of your walk.