

Give An Answer But Not Just Any Answer

Colossians 4:6 Your speech always with grace, having been seasoned with salt that you will know how you should respond to each person...that

God has a reason for everything He does and says.

Yes, this is Paul writing, but he is guided by God the Holy Spirit. And God has a reason for seasoning our talk with salt. It is not so that you will talk like a poet but **so that you will know**. This is a *perfect active infinitive* of the verb *oida*. And this will help us to understand what ‘*seasoned with salt*’ really means. We want our speech seasoned with salt *so that we will know*. The *Perfect tense* is used to intensify this aspect of every time we open our mouths. The *Active voice* means this is completed by a believer filled with the Holy Spirit and pertinent doctrine in his soul. And the *infinitive* is translated here **that or so that** introducing the result of seasoning our speech with salt. However, when the infinitive is used to introduce result, it can refer to one of three results:

- (1) Used to introduce an actual result.
- (2) Used to introduce a conceived result assuming a consequence of some action.
- (3) Used to introduce an intended result, fulfilling a deliberate aim or purpose, therefore blending purpose and result.

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And it is number 3 that is pertinent here: translated **so that you may know**. Why do I point all this out? To make us aware of the designed fact that God has a purpose for all the ministries of the Holy Spirit - His use of knowledge of the Word of God in us, to result in us and through us when we allow the Holy Spirit to work in us. We allow the Holy Spirit to work in these marvelous ways when we simply trust Him to minister to us. The Greek word translated *to know* is used in two different senses: *to see* as with the eye; *to know*. Again, it is important that we understand this verb in this context for it describes the meaning of *being seasoned with salt*. The verb occurs over 300 times in the New Testament. In Classical Greek, this verb was used to denote a ‘perfective’ kind of knowledge in contrast with ‘progressive’ or ‘acquired’ knowledge.’ We have seen this word in Colossians 3:24 **knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance**, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, right after the Rapture of the church. **It is the Lord Christ whom you serve**. We are to know that it is the Lord whom we serve, not man, and it is from the Lord we will receive reward for service in the power of His Spirit. Then again, knowing the Lord is in

Colossians 4:1 Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.

And now in Colossians 4:6 when we allow the Holy Spirit to have our speech in grace seasoned with salt **so that we will know how you should respond to each person**. If we season our speech of grace with salt so that we will know—this is the *deliberate aim* of God.

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Now what is it we are to know? **how you should respond to each person.** Note carefully: *should respond*. The *Present Active Indicative* of the verb *dei* gets down to our purpose for being left here on earth. To get an idea of the intensity of this verb it may well be translated in various ways: *what is necessary; we ought to do this; we must do this*. It means “it is necessary with the idea that one must or ought or should do something.” There is no indication of the source of the obligation. In Classical Greek one must do this as of the demands of proper grammar, law or custom. A soldier may die because at an instant he is thrown into a situation that demands that he surrenders his life for his comrades. There are certain things that a Christian *must do* because he is a Christian, because he is a servant of the Lord, because he loves the Lord. And one of those things that we must do is to *give proper response to each person*. And yes, dear people, sometimes this can be most difficult and most challenging. First: *response* is better here for this does not refer to just giving an answer to a question but responding to any number of circumstances. Secondly, not just to give a response or answer but to give the right or truthful response. The verb is made up of the Greek *krino* which means to make a judgment, to separate lies from truth, separate what is important and what is not, to make proper judgment. However, the verb used here includes much more than just a truthful answer or response but includes the manner in which you say your response. Look once again at

Galatians 6:1 Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness;

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***each one* looking to yourself, so that you too
will not be tempted.**

Not always can it be with a *spirit of gentleness*.

**1 Corinthians 4:21 What do you desire? Shall I
come to you with a rod, or with love and a
spirit of gentleness?**

Ezekiel, the priest and prophet of God to Israel while in captivity in Babylon declared the wrath of God. But God will temper the declaration of His wrath with the assurance of promise of restoration.

Therefore, do not speed read past the closing words of verse 6: **to each person**. Wouldn't it be nice if to everyone we could hug them and tell them they are alright and everything is going to turn out alright...knowing that that is the truth. That is not the plan of God. Let us look at how difficult this exhortation may be in our lives. First, the exhortation:

**Colossians 4:6 Your speech, always with
grace, as being seasoned with salt, so that
you will know how you should respond to
each person.**

This may refer to believers or unbelievers—outsiders.

This may refer to family or friends or people at work, church, wherever we travel in life.

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This may be concerned with theology, morality, politics, ethics or any such thing.

This may refer to a person who is troubled in their soul; a discouraged person or someone depressed...you will have the answer they need!!!

This may refer to the way a Christian ought to live and not live. They may be questioning—seeking an answer or mocking the way you think and live or out of curiosity.

There is a direct relationship between being able to give the needed correct response and between saying it and knowing it in your own soul. This is just one of the multitude of reasons for studying the Word of God, of going to a local church where the Word of God is taught. And dear people, it does not depend on human IQ. You get around a person with a high IQ, you may get an inferiority complex. If this happens know two things: first, you have no right to ever feel this way. And secondly, you should realize you don't have that salt! You need what they need, doctrine from the Word of God in your soul. So, go to a church where you can learn the Word of God. If you have doctrine in your soul, people, you have information that he/she needs. And then with truth in your soul, it is not you who must convince. That is the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

When you give answers or make a response to a situation, make sure that they realize that you are addressing their need. And you are saying these things not to judge them, but out of love for them. And that you are giving them God's will, God's Word, not your likes and dislikes. Your response must be truthful as per the Word of God. And be certain that it

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is by the Holy Spirit that we say the right thing at the right time in the proper manner.

Scenario 1: A believer who does not want to work, even though he/she is able to work and even without working wants you to feed him. Truthful response:

2 Thessalonians 3:10 For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.

Many Christians are tempted to respond: *I don't care what the Word of God says.*” This is not fulfilling what you ought to do as unto the Lord. This is the Word of God. Now, you answer this person in a *spirit of gentleness* that he must work, to eat. They don't need a dissertation on your political or economical views but on the truthfulness of the Word of God. Hopefully, he will respond or be put to shame and then respond. The problem in Satan's world is that he goes over to unbelievers who will cheerfully give him to eat and then he and they make a derogatory statement about those mean Christians. This is why you must be committed to doing the Word of God in the power and leading of His Spirit.

Scenario 2: A believer chooses to be a fornicator or adulterer or homosexual or lesbian. They love to hear so called Christians tell them it is alright. They are openly invited not only to attend but to be a leader in their assembly. They are pleased being told that living a life contrary to the Word of God is alright with God. The people that tell them it is

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alright are ‘puffed up’ with the accolades they receive from the sinners and from the unbelieving world. But dear people, God is not pleased. He is not pleased with the sinner, nor with those who condone the sins. So, what is the proper response? First, we must be very careful to make an honest and truthful judgment of what is taught in the Word of God. Then, at the right time, express what the will of God is and how you must abide by the will of God. And if that hurts them, you are sorry, but God and Jesus Christ are more important than they are. Pleasing God is more important than pleasing them.

Scenario 3: One comes to you and protests that you say if they do not believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior they will spend eternity in ‘hell.’ Are you going to change your gospel? No, you, in a spirit of gentleness, present them with the Love of God as per John 3:16 and make it clear that they do nothing but believe in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Warning: Please understand that they will not always respond to your grace, answered, even seasoned with salt. Many reject the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. Many Christians reject the grace manner that God desires us to live. Do not take their rejection personally. You cannot please all people, even with the truth spoken in love. You must be more committed to the truth than they are to a lie.

People, if the world hates us because of our sinful life, or because of our self-righteous lifestyle or because of our legalism, or because of our judgmental superiority, shame on us. But if they hate us because of our commitment to Jesus Christ then you stand vindicated before God.

We now move to the closing words of Paul in this epistle, verses 7-18.

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What do you think the greatest characteristic of a Christian is?

To God the greatest characteristic is *faithfulness*.

Some emphasize service. Oh, service is the greatest characteristic. To others it is knowledge of doctrine, the more you know the greater you are. While to others emotionalism – the greatest Christian is the one who is the most charismatic. And there are churches that are based on one of these and so people gravitate to the church that emphasizes what they do best and where they can shine forth. Service, Knowledge, Emotion.

But dear people to God it is *faithfulness*.

Remember where we are in history. We are in the first century of the Church. The beginning of a new dispensation. And if you don't like the word *dispensation*, then something simple like a new order, a new government, a new system, a new arrangement. For example, from Adam to Abraham, the spiritual responsibility was up to the father of a family. Then from Abraham to Jesus Christ, there was a new order, a specialized priesthood and system of worship. Then we all must admit, whether you call it a dispensation or system or arrangement, we must all admit that things changed with the ascension of Jesus Christ and the establishment of the Church. So, this is the first century, therefore, an important time for the development of a new dispensation. And we will see some of the most important characteristics God is looking for in the Church Age. Different personalities and callings but the common greatness is their faithfulness.

**Colossians 4:7 As to all my affairs, Tychicus,
our beloved brother and faithful servant and**

fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information

As to all my affairs. Literally *the all things related to me.*

Each or our lives is made up of *things*. Not just materialistic things but experiences, circumstances, encounters, difficulties joys, sadness, disappointments, good things!

Next we have a new name, Tychicus! We are now being introduced to truly a great man of history, the kind of man the church was built upon.

Let's take a Profile of Tychicus

1. First, let's look at his name. It is an unusual name for as important person as we have here. His name means fortunate, or fateful. He may have been brought up in a family who believed strongly in fate or chance. But he was converted to Christian faith. And this belief would take a strong control over his life. He no longer believed in fate but in God's Sovereign design. As great as this man will be to Church history, I do not recommend that you name your son, Tychicus.
2. We do not know how this man heard the gospel. But, he is first mentioned with Paul on Paul's third missionary journey when Paul travelled from Greece through Macedonia and was accompanied by a group of seven men. Acts 20:4-5.
3. When Paul went erroneously to Jerusalem, Tychicus did not go with him. Scripture does not say that he disapproved but simply that he did not go with him.

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4. He rejoins with Paul during Paul's first Roman imprisonment This is our passage of Colossians 4:7-8 and Ephesians 6:21-22.

Paul sent Tychicus to the Ephesians, most probably while carrying Paul's famous letter to them so that they might learn about Paul's circumstances. It is likely that Tychicus carried Paul's letter to the Colossians at the same time, since Paul sent him to them as well and for the same reason. [Sourced from <http://www.abarim-publications.com/Meaning/Tychicus.html#.XSA5W-hKiUk>]

5. This next mentioning is important in learning about Tychicus. There was trouble on the island of Crete. Crete was filled with a troubled people. Generally, people on Crete were there because of trouble somewhere else, like in Greece or Egypt. Crete gave birth to the likes of the Spartans and Philistines. Anyway, when there was trouble on Crete, Paul sent none other than Tychicus to help Titus handle and straighten out these people. Titus 3:12.
6. During Paul's Second Imprisonment in Rome, he sent Tychicus to Ephesus. 2 Tim. 4:12. He was to take over the Ephesian church to relieve Timothy so that Timothy could join Paul in Rome while Paul was dying.

Back to Colossians 4:7 **the things pertaining to me Tychicus will tell you.** They are hungry to learn about Paul. He was loved by those he had ministered too. They knew he was always in trouble and they cared and prayed for him.

Here we have two vital characteristics of this Tychicus. First, he is called a **beloved brother.** This is not some sweetness and light.

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Beloved

1. I hope I can explain this to you in two words without in any way one word taking away from the other. Both are different and both are highly sought after: ***Beloved & Esteemed.***
2. Beloved is a term of endearment.

Matt. 3:17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, (from God the father) “This is My beloved Son, (Jesus Christ at His baptism—sign that He was going to fulfill the Plan of God the Father, for Him to go to the cross) in whom I am well-pleased.”

3. God loves all believers as His beloved:

Romans 1:7 to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: (that is everyone who has believed in Jesus, His Son as their Savior) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

OK, let's take a quick look at the saying '*I love you.*' A man says this to his closest friend, and then that same day tells his wife he loves her. There is a big difference. A woman tells her child she loves him/her; then she tells her husband I love you...There is a big difference. God loves all unbelievers...God loves every born-again believer. There is a big difference. In John 14:23, if anyone, any believer loves Jesus Christ, God the Father will love that believer.

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But God loves every believer—but there is a difference. God loves the believer who is wasting his or her life here on earth, with no spiritual growth. God loves the believer who is increasing in the knowledge of God and growing in the knowledge of Christ by the Holy Spirit...But, there is a difference.

4. This word also includes the concept of admiration or esteem. First, this is true of God the Father for His Son. God has the highest esteem for His Son and what His Son is doing.

Likewise, believers should have esteem for other believers who serve the Lord. For example, I have the highest esteem for our Jim Langston, as well as others in this assembly.

5. Tychicus was loved by everyone who knew him in the body of Christ. This means everyone held him in highest regards and respect. It was for this reason that Paul was able to send him to Ephesus and Crete.

Notice that the Bible emphasizes the character of this man, not his personality. Many people are distracted by personality. It is the character that counts. Every parent should teach their children, both sons and daughters that it is their character that counts. Personality may get votes, but it is character that wins friends.

Next we come to the faithfulness of this man.