

## GRACE-FILLED COMMUNICATION

In Colossians 4:2-6 we are given the New Testament way to communicate to God and to man. We ought not to be motivated by the mere positive thinking of men, but rather by the great grace and the great power of God. Let's examine three grace-filled ways of communication that launch the mighty power of God.

### I. Praying Grace

Colossians 4:2,3: *"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:"*

A. Unceasing in Prayer: *"Continue in prayer..."*

"Continue" comes to us from the Greek word "proskartereo" meaning to be courageously persistent, in other words hold fast and not let go. This calls to mind I Thessalonians 5:17: *"Pray without ceasing."* The phrase "without ceasing" comes to us from the Greek word "adialeptos" which means uninterruptedly, i.e. without omission.

B. Unrelenting in Prayer: *"...and watch in the same..."*

The Lord Jesus used this same word "watch" when Matthew records, *"And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak"* (Matthew 26:40, 41). This word "watch" is translated from the Greek word "gregoreuoto" which means to keep awake, i.e. watch with vigilance.

C. Unabashed in Prayer: *"...with thanksgiving..."*

A thankful person has abandoned egotism. He is caught up with who God is and what He is all about. A thankful person is overwhelmed with the goodness and grace of God. A key to continuing in prayer is to stay constant in thankfulness.

Marcus Aurelius, Roman emperor and stoic philosopher said, "Do not indulge in dreams of having what you have not, but reckon up the chief of the blessings you do possess, and then thankfully remember how you would crave for them if they were not yours." Aurelius, although a brilliant man, had not yet realized that with Christ we do not need to play mind games about how to cultivate a thankful spirit. Through Christ we have someone to thank for everything. G.K. Chesterton said, "The worst moment for an atheist is when he feels a profound sense of gratitude and has no one to thank." We have our Lord and Savior to thank (I Thessalonians 5:18)! How profitable it is when we give Him praise. Doubts flee, discouragement evaporates and the Devil loses when we become unabashed in our thankfulness!

D. Unambiguous in Prayer: "...*Withal praying also for us...*"

Paul is clear and definite in his directive to pray for him. It is a humbling but great place to be when we recognize our dependence upon our Lord and the need of His children to pray for us. Paul said, "*Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me...*"(Ephesians 6:18, 19a). As Paul listed the whole armor of God in Ephesians 6:13-18, he listed loins girt (belt) with truth, the breastplate of righteousness, feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit (the Bible). Although "greaves" is not mentioned directly, this is what is alluded to in the beginning of Ephesians 6:18, "*Praying always with all prayer....*" Greaves were a protection for the knees and shins. Protected knees will give us power to stand in battle. Paul tells us he could not stand in battle without prayer from God's people!

E. Unassailable in Prayer: "...*that God would open unto us a door of utterance...*"

Paul referred to these opportunities as "open doors" such as found in I Corinthians 16:9 and Revelation 3:8.

F. Unconquerable in Prayer: "...*to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:*"

The apostle's imprisonment did not restrict the Gospel from being preached or people being reached. This is perfectly illustrated in Philippians 1:12 and 13.

## **II. Preaching Grace**

Colossians 4:4,5: *"That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time."*

A. A Clear Proclamation: *"That I may make it manifest..."*

Preachers, from the days of the apostles until now, must be consumed with making the Gospel known and the Word of God understood. We need to see it big but keep it simple.

B. A Clarion Call: *"...as I ought to speak."*

This preacher could not escape his commission! He said, *"...yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!"* (I Corinthians 9:16).

C. A Calculated Opportunity: *"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time."*

We should be mindful of how our witness comes across to those outside the faith. We must be wise and take advantage of every opportunity God gives us.

## **III. Pleasing Grace**

Colossians 4:6: *"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."*

A. Favorable Articulation: *"Let your speech be always with grace..."*

We need to allow the grace of God given to us in salvation be our *modus operandi* in communication to others.

B. Flavorful Enunciation: *"...seasoned with salt..."*

Salt preserves, salt heals, salt enhances flavor and cuts the bitter and salt makes us thirsty. Jesus said, *"Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another"* (Mark 9:50).

C. Fortright Verbalization: "...that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."

Peter commands us, "...be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (I Peter 3:15). There are two great characteristics of the early church mentioned in Acts 4:33 that we should be challenged to exemplify: "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33). The two characteristics are "great power" and "great grace!"

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Johnny Pope". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J" and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.