

Rooted - Part 11  
“Where Faith Meets Life”  
Colossians 4:2-6

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The Christian life isn't just showing up to church, hearing a sermon we can't understand, and hoping to glean a word, a Bible reference, or something out of it *sometimes*. We need to learn how faith meets life and how it works in real *life*. As we end the Book of Colossians, we're going to see that Paul gets super-practical. He just lays it out. The big idea here is about being rooted and about our roots going down deep into the soil. A rooted life shows up in how we pray, how we live, and how we speak.

What we say matters. Some people think following Jesus is only about what we *believe* - we just have to *believe right*. If we just believe the right things about the Bible, about culture, about the world we live in, then it's going to be okay - we're going to “get in the door.” St. Peter's going to be there and say, “*Hey, come on in! We've got your mansion ready for you!*” But, that's not exactly how this works. Paul shows us it's really about how we *live every day*.

Faith meets life where we live every single day. It's how we enter a grocery store, how we drive, how it's practical for *everything*. This is where it works, and if it doesn't work in our daily life, how can we expect it to work anywhere else? If it doesn't work where we live, where we work, and where we play, then honestly, what's the point? What are we doing here? We're just checking a box trying to get God's approval for showing up to church or else we're here to learn and be disciples and say, “*How is this going to help me? How is this going to work in me and through me in everyday life? How can I bring Jesus into everything, where I live, where I work, and where I play?*”

It matters in our prayer life, in our daily interactions, and it happens in our conversations - in how we speak and what we say, because what we say matters. This is where faith meets life.

## Point One - Pray it

Colossians 4:2

*"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful, and pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ for which I am in chains."*

Paul wrote this letter from a Roman prison cell. He's saying, *"This is what got me to change - the gospel of Jesus Christ got me here."* And, he's asking for prayer. He says, *"devote yourselves to prayer being watchful and thankful."* Right there he's describing what an *intercessor* is. The word *intercession* literally means *to stand in-between*. When we hear somebody referring to *intercessory prayer*, they're talking about someone who God has called to *pray* - to stand in the middle - to get in-between what's happening and what's in God's heart, and to somehow bridge that gap *in prayer*.

That's all it means. It sounds like a fancy word, but it's really not. It just means someone who's willing to stand in-between and pray. When someone's interceding for us - they're *praying* for us - they're standing in-between. They're standing in the middle. They're trying to *protect* us. They're trying to call out things and handle things in their prayer closet and they're standing in-between. Some of us are called to intercessory prayer and we didn't even know there was a *name* for it. We just often feel called to pray - sometimes in the middle of the night.

Even in the night watches, God will call us to pray in intercessory prayer. We might hang up on God when he does that, so we have to say, *"Lord help me."* He'll speak into us and say, *"I want you to pray for somebody."* We'll wake up with somebody on our mind and that's a signal to pray - to intercede - to stand between. When Paul says *"devote yourselves to prayer,"* he literally means *this*.

*If we don't pray it, we won't see it.* This is just a simple "ism." God calls us to pray. He calls us to speak into the atmosphere. He calls us to stand and speak and see things change, and *expect* change when we pray. So, if we don't *pray* it, we won't *see* it. *"Devote yourselves to prayer."* Here's what the word *devoted* in this scripture means. It literally means *to be consistent - to stay on it*. To be *devoted* is to be *committed to*. It's to be *in alignment with*. So, to be devoted to prayer means we're going to do this no matter what. Also, we don't have to pray "fancy." We don't have to pray in Elizabethan or King James English.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

*"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."*

*To cease means to stop.* Paul's saying, "Don't stop praying." We're not to *cease* praying. He says, "Give thanks in all circumstances." Notice he said all. "Give thanks in all - in every circumstance - for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." We're to be devoted, consistent, and *watchful*. Being watchful simply means *to stay aware* - to be *situationally aware* - to be aware of our circumstances and our environment. Paul says we're to pray with situational awareness. We're to pray this way: "head on a swivel." We're to be looking, like when we're in traffic on I-10.

So, we're praying, first of all, for *ourselves*. "Father, forgive me for I've sinned." We start that way because of what we thought about the guy that just cut us off! Things happen to us and we have to navigate life with practical theology. It matters even out in these places where we can laugh about it. We have to be watchful, be aware, and be thankful. When we have an attitude of gratitude, we're *grounded* - we're *stable*. *Stable* makes us able. Paul says this, "Pray that God will open doors," but notice he doesn't say to pray for *comfort*. He doesn't ask them to pray, "Get me out of here." He just says, "Lord, I pray for open doors and for opportunities that I can bring the gospel - even in this place."

Where faith meets life, we're to start our day with one simple prayer, "God, show me where You're working today." Imagine if the Lord opened our eyes - we have awareness, we're stepping in, we're devoted to prayer, and we have an attitude of gratitude. We're going to get in there as he begins to show us things and we ask, "Lord, show me where You're working today." Henry Blackaby, in his book Experiencing God, says, "Look to see where God is working and then join him in his work."

When we see God at work, that's his invitation for us to join him in his work. We're looking, we're watching, and we ask the Lord, "Father, show me where You're working today." And as we go, it's not as we're sitting in a prayer room or prayer closet, it's literally as we're going about our business - as we're working - at the store - doing what we do, with our eyes wide open and engaging life. And the Lord says, "Pray for that one. They're having a bad day today. Pray for that one." We never know, when we walk into HEB, what kinds of situations are standing there right in front of us - even standing in *line* with us.

If we knew, it'd probably blow our minds because everybody looks *nice*, everybody looks good. They're in there to do their business, and then go. But, what if the Lord began to show us things, standing in line in the grocery store? What if God opened our eyes and we began to see his activity and what's *really* going on with people. That becomes God's invitation for us to join him in his work. Is it God's heart for us to pray for people out in public? We talk about being in the public square as we talk about patriotism or cultural engagement, but wouldn't it also mean our voice being heard in the public square, with us being unashamed to *pray* for somebody in public? This is where we really live.

Most people are not going to recoil or get mad at us, saying, "Oh, how embarrassing this is - Christians praying in public." What usually happens is people are glad that somebody was willing to pray in public. When we see others do it, we should encourage them and say, "That was awesome. Way to go. Good on you, bro." Just encourage one another. It may be as simple as talking to a clerk and checking on him. "How's your day going?" And then add the word "really." That changes the whole dynamic. What is that? That sounds like a little thing, but it's *not* a little thing for that person we just prayed for, led by the Holy Spirit. How about we become difference-makers this week and shift some atmospheres?

There are some aisles at HEB and Walmart that need the atmosphere changed, and we can bring life into these places. This is what Paul's saying, "As you go, as you're doing life, be devoted to this." It's so practical because it's where faith meets life. Here's the big idea - prayer tunes us in to what God is already doing. That's just another way to say, "Look to see where God's working, then join him in his work." But, as we pray and we're in an attitude to pray - we're praying without ceasing - we're going to see things and notice things that we may not have noticed otherwise. We need to be better "noticers," where we're *noting*, seeing things, and being sensitive to them in the Spirit.

## **Point Two - Obey it**

"Just do it." Here's how this goes: Colossians 4:5 says, "Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders." What is an outsider? Do we even understand? This means when we're in the presence of those who are not believers - not followers of Jesus - not disciples - we're to be wise in the way we act toward them. Notice Paul *doesn't* say, "Judge them, shun them, or condemn them." He just says, "Be wise in how you act toward them, and make the most of every opportunity," - because God is presenting opportunities to us every day, *all day long*.

Acts 1:8

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

This is a mandate. It's actually a *charge*: "You will be my witnesses." In other words, "You will talk to other people about Me as you obey that." He's saying, "Just do what I'm telling you to do." In Matthew 28, Jesus gives the Great Commission saying, "Go therefore and make disciples." If we read that in the original language, it actually says, "As you are going, disciple nations where you live, where you work, and where you play - out there where faith meets life." Here's a point, If we don't act and step in, we'll miss it, so be *intentional*. Live life on purpose.

We also need to be *present*. Sometimes, when we go to the store, we're not thinking about being in the store, but we're already thinking about where we're going *after* that. And living that way, we can *miss* things - we can miss *moments* - we can miss someone who just needed a word of encouragement or a nice word - maybe a clerk who just needed someone *not* to complain and to say, "*Hey, thank you for what you do, by the way. Appreciate you.*" That goes a long way to somebody who's having a bad day. You can make a difference because this is where faith meets life, where people live, where they work, where they play. The last part of that is, be *interruptible*.

If people interrupt us, we say, "*Wait, this is my time, my life, my moment, my space, my road, my highway.*" It's all about "*mine*," right? But, we can be interruptible and say, "*God, whatever, whenever, wherever You want to show up today, I'm in.*" Let's be *interruptible* at HEB - this is where this stuff works. Faith meets life at HEB, or any other place we like to go. How about Backwoods BBQ - or at work - or at our kids' game. Boy, there's a good place to bring Jesus, especially for some of us wild parents who are always mad at the refs and calling them bad names.

How about when we're running late to *church*? There are times when we're running late to church and we're just *mad* - we're *upset* - we're *frustrated*: "*I'm just going to go wait in the car.*" That's a signal for "*Come on, get with it. Let's go. We're late. We're going to be late again - and somebody's going to get our seat at church.*" When we're running late, this is where it meets life - like driving on I-10. These aren't random moments. They're *God* moments. Slow down. Pay attention. Step in. When God is showing up in real life, he's inviting us to join him in the work that he wants to do wherever we are.

God *opens* doors, but we have to walk *through* them. When we pray, "*Lord, open doors,*" he's like, "*I've opened 1,500 doors for you that you haven't walked through yet. Maybe it seems a little slow right now because you haven't walked through the last doors I opened for you.*" We need to ask God to open doors, but also to give us eyes to *see* - to give us a heart to notice what's going on so we don't just blow past people and miss opportunities to bring *life*.

Colossians 4:6

*"Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."*

Another way to say that is gracious words, gracious speech, seasoned with salt, so that we may know how to answer everyone. In other words, there are times when we speak gracious words building up, but there are *other* times that we have to be *salty*. We have to say what needs to be said. When Jesus said, "*You're salt and light,*" then we're *both* - we light the way, but we also bring the salt. We speak the truth not just *in* love, but *because* we love - seasoned with salt, so that we may know how to answer *everyone*.

### **Point Three - Say it**

If we don't *say* it, they won't *hear* it. Isn't it good when we think about encouraging somebody? But isn't it *sad* when we don't actually act on it and do it? - when we don't actually say it out loud, or we don't actually text it - we don't actually send it - we don't actually sit down and write a card - we don't actually convey and communicate that word. It does no good other than we feel a little better: *"Yeah, I really appreciate them. They're amazing, God. Oh, I feel good already."* Encouragement matters. What we *say* matters. We need to say it and not hold it back to ourselves because if we don't say it, they won't hear it.

Also, if we don't share the gospel, they won't hear it. We hear of stories in the Middle East right now where Jesus - "a man in white" - is showing up and bringing the gospel to people. But that's not the norm and it isn't plan A. Plan A is that *we* speak life. *We* speak the good news of the gospel to others because that's where faith meets life - it's where we *live*. Also, we speak with grace - but grace is not just soft. It's also *powerful* because it means God's power, God's strength, God's authority, God's ability, and God's favor to do what we literally can't do in and of ourself. Those are the gracious words. Speak with that kindness. Speak with strength.

Also, we need to tell our story - our good-news story - our gospel story. Share it. It's good news that's meant to be shared. Where faith meets life we don't need perfect words. Just share what God's done in our life. It doesn't have to be fancy. Our prayers don't have to be fancy. Our obedience doesn't have to be fancy, and the words we say don't have to be fancy either, they just need to be filled with grace - filled with *life* - sometimes salty, but they need to be *life-giving* and powerful. Pray it, obey it, and *say* it. It's so simple, but this week, let's pray for *one open door*.

### **Prayer**

*"Father, would You open a door for us and then give us the eyes to see that door? Help us to speak one word of life to someone who needs it. When we go to the restaurant, help us to pause and speak life over our waiter or waitress - to ask them their name and call them by name and speak a word over life of them. Lord, we want to walk in obedience. Help us to hear Your voice better. Father, we consecrate ourselves to You. God, we ask that the truth we just heard would sink deep into the soil of our hearts. We pray that we would be good soil, where Your Word will take root in us and grow and produce life for us, for our families, and for our community. God, for all those we encounter this week, we pray that You would bring to life Your Word and this teaching, God, that we might see Your activity and Your fingerprints all over the week ahead. God, we dedicate it to You right now and we give You our hearts. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*