

How To Be An Effective Witness

Colossians 4:2-6

Pastor John Miller

I want you to follow with me, beginning in Colossians 4:2 through 6. Paul says, “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...”—Paul was writing the book of Colossians from prison; he was in chains—“...that I may make it manifest...”—that is, the mystery of Christ—“...as I ought to speak. Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”

Years ago I learned a poem that is fitting with the text we just read. It goes like this:

You're writing a Gospel,

A chapter each day,

By the things that you do,

And the words that you say.

Men read what you write,

Whether faithful or true.

Tell me, what is the Gospel,

According to you.

That's my question this morning: What is the Gospel, according to you? Are you living the Gospel in the home (chapter 3, verses 18-21)? Are you as a wife submitted to your husband? As a husband, do you love your wife as Christ loved the church? As a child in that home, are you obedient to your parents? As a parent, are you giving to your children and raising them in the ways of the Lord? Not provoking them to anger or wrath? How about in the workplace? We saw that in chapter 3, verse 22 to chapter 4, verse 1. Are you living Christ in the home and in the workplace? When you go to the job on Monday morning, do you let Jesus shine out of your life? Do other people know that you love Jesus, and is Jesus shining through your life?

In this text in Colossians 4:1-6, Paul moves to talking about being an effective witness. The key is in verse 5, which says, “Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.” Who are “them that are without”? It's talking about non-Christians, the unbelieving world, those who are outside the church, outside the body of Christ. So he's talking about how we walk, how we live our Christian life in front of an unbelieving, watching world.

We are “writing a Gospel, a chapter each day, by the things that we do and the words that we say.” People are observing. They may not read the tract you hand them, but they are going to watch your tracks. They may not want to listen to what you say on the job, but they are going to watch the way you work and watch your attitude and the words that come out of your mouth. So we, as Christ followers, have a responsibility to be effective witnesses to a watching world.

But here’s the question I want to ask and answer from the text: How can I, or we, be an effective witness for Jesus Christ? I want to give you three ways to do that. Number one, if we are going to be effective witnesses in front of a watching world, we need to pray purposefully. We need to be men and women who pray with purpose. We can’t be effective in our witness if we don’t learn to pray. Someone said, “Before we speak to men for God, we must speak to God for men.” That’s so important.

Let me tell you how you should pray. Let me break it down from the text. First of all, we must pray faithfully. Notice it in verse 2: “Continue in prayer.” It’s an imperative, so it’s a command. When Paul uses the expression “Continue in prayer,” it’s a command; it’s not an option. He’s not giving you a suggestion or an idea; he’s actually telling you to continually pray, or be ongoing in prayer. It’s literally means to devote time, attention, and strength and energy to the task. “Continue” carries the idea of being strong in your praying.

God does not want us to give up on prayer. Many times when we’re praying for the lost—and I believe that would have a perfect application in the context—we give up. “They’ll never get saved!” or “The more I pray for them, the more heathen they get! The more worldly they get. I’m just going to give up.” In James 5:16, it says, “The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man...”—or “mankind”—“...availeth much.” So we need to be effectual and fervent in praying for the lost faithfully.

The second characteristic of our prayer is that it should be watchful. Notice it in verse 2: “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same.” Notice that expression, “watch in the same.” It means keep awake; don’t fall asleep. What an amazing thought. I love to sleep. The other day I said to my nine-year-old grandson, Conner, “Let’s take a nap.”

“No!” He thought he was being punished.

“Naps are good. Come on, let’s lay down.” Whenever I watch the grandkids, after about an hour, I say, “Let’s play lay on the bed for a while.” I know now why you have kids when you’re young. You don’t have the energy to keep up with them. It’s amazing. My wife says I have the gift of sleep, and I thank God for that. I don’t have any trouble sleeping. But the Bible does say, “He gives His beloved sleep,” so He loves me and He gives me sleep.

But when it comes to prayer, God wants us to stay awake. I’ve gotten down on my knees by the bed, I fold my hands and put my head on my hands. It’s just a perfect little cup to hold my head, I’m elevated just enough off the bed that I can still breathe and before I know it, I say, “Lord, good night.” You just start to pray, and then an hour later you wake up with a big red spot on

your forehead. “Wow! What’s up? Lord, I’ll talk to You tomorrow. I’m going to bed.”

Remember when Jesus went into the Garden of Gethsemane? He went a little further into the garden with his three disciples, Peter, James and John. Jesus asked them to pray. Not only did He ask them to pray but to “Watch and pray.” I used to think that you wore a watch when you prayed; “Watch and pray.” But the word “watch” means to stay awake. Jesus asked them to stay awake and pray, but they fell asleep. Jesus goes further into the garden, lays on His face in the dirt and He prayed in agony. The Bible says that He “sweat great drops of blood.” One of the most moving scenes in the life of Christ was when He was in Gethsemane.

If you want to enter into the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, understand Gethsemane. The word “Gethsemane” means “oil press.” It’s where they pressed out the olives and made the olive oil. All the sins were beginning to weigh down on Jesus as He was being pressed and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood in His agony before the Father. He said, “Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me, but not My will but Thine be done.”

Then Jesus went back to His faithful-three, inner-circle disciples whom He had just said to stay awake and pray. What are they doing? They’re sleeping. Aren’t we like them? The Bible says, “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Jesus said, “Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation.” So this passage is saying “Stay awake.”

Peter learned his lesson there in the Garden of Gethsemane. In 1 Peter 5:8, it says, “Be sober, be vigilant...”—That’s the idea of staying awake—“...because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” There really is a devil, he doesn’t like you and he really wants to destroy you and your faith in God. So we need to be watchful, vigilant and sober in our prayers.

Thirdly, we should pray with thanksgiving. So number one, we need to pray faithfully; number two, we need to pray watchfully; and number three, we need to pray thankfully. Notice it in the text, verse 2, “with thanksgiving.” So he says, “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.” Moffett renders that “Maintain your zeal for prayer by thanksgiving.” That would indicate something that is so cool: that when you learn to give thanksgiving to God, it keeps the fire burning in prayer. If your prayers are cooling off or dying out, maybe you need to add a little thankfulness to your prayers.

I spoke at a marriage conference yesterday in Fontana. On the way there I intentionally opted to not listen to music, which I normally do, and not to listen to the radio but to turn everything off in the car and just to pray. Then the Lord stuck me with “Why don’t you just give thanks? Don’t ask for anything. Just thank Me.” So all the way there, I’m thanking God for all of His blessings. I began to count my blessings. I was just being thankful, and what a fire that burned in my heart! Just to think of how good God has been. What a great God we serve!

Begin to add that element of thanksgiving into your prayers. Try it sometime. “I’m not going to ask God for anything. I’ve been praying for a job and praying for my marriage and praying for

my kids and grandkids and praying for my health and praying for my finances. I'm just going to stop and say, 'Lord, thank you.'" Then begin to thank God for all the things He has done.

Someone said, "The cultivation of a thankful heart will do much to keep one alert and alive in their prayer life." Paul knew that. That's why he said, "Continue in prayer," "watch in the same," but don't forget to be thankful. In an old Scottish prayer book, it says, "We praise Thee for the grace by which Thou hast enabled us to bear the ills of the present world; that our souls are enriched by a fuller experience of Your love. We have a more child-like dependence on Thy will and a deeper sympathy for the suffering and the sad."

Basically, in modern English, he is saying, "Lord, I want to thank you for the bad things and the hard things and the bitter things and the trials of my life, because they have taught me to trust in You. They've taught me to depend on You. They taught me to rely upon You. They taught me to be more sympathetic and compassionate and kind toward others."

God doesn't always take away our burdens and our problems. You know, when you pray, "God, heal me," and God doesn't heal you, I believe, as God told Paul in 2 Corinthians 12 when he prayed three times, "God, take away this thorn in my flesh"—Have you ever prayed for God to heal your body? I've prayed that many, many times. "Take away this pain. Take away this affliction. Take away this suffering." To Paul, God said three times, "No. No. No. But I'm going to do something for you, Paul, that you didn't ask for. I'm going to give you My grace. My grace is going to be sufficient. My strength is going to be made perfect in your weakness." When Paul heard those words he said, "Then most gladly will I glory in my weaknesses, that the power of God can rest upon me. For when I am weak, then in Him I am strong." The secret of strength is not our strength; the secret of strength is understanding that I am weak and I need God's strength. It drives me to Him and dependence upon His strength. We pray thankfully, and we can thank God even for the bitter things.

Fourthly, we pray purposefully. See it in verses 3-4. "Withal praying also for us..."—Paul got very specific—"...that God would open unto us a door of utterance..."—he's talking about speaking the Gospel to others—"...to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds.; that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak."

One of the problems that we have in our praying quite often is that our prayers are too vague and general. Have you ever been to a prayer meeting where someone says, "God, bless the world." Bless the world? Now I know that God is omniscient—He knows everything—but with a little sanctified imagination, I see God scratching His head and asking, "What would you like Me to do to bless the world?" I've been in prayer meetings where people said, "Lord, save the world. Save everybody." I'm thinking that the Bible says, "Broad is the gate, and many there be that go down to destruction." It doesn't mean that we shouldn't be praying for the lost, but not everybody is going to be saved. You can't pray, "God, save the world," because the Bible says the whole world won't be saved. A lot of people are going to reject the Gospel.

So how about getting a little more specific. I believe the devil loves general, vague prayers;

"Just bless the world. Just bless everybody. Make everybody happy, in Jesus' name. Hallelujah." And God's like, "Woah. What specifically would you like Me to do?" One of the reasons Satan likes general prayers is because you never know if God answers them. If you're praying specifically for a healing or a job for a particular person and you write down in a prayer journal the date and time you start praying for them, you're going to know whether God has answered that prayer. Satan doesn't like that, because God does answer prayers. Isn't it cool to write down something you start praying for and then years later you go back and realize that God answered that prayer; that God did what I asked Him to do. What an awesome thing that is.

So I recommend that we zero in and get very specific when we ask God something. I've also been involved in meetings where people just tell God. "God, I'm really lonely. God, I'm really needy. God, I just don't know what to do. God, I just don't know what's going on. Lord, that's just what's happening." Well, that's nice. You just told God everything He already knew. Isn't the idea of prayer asking Him for something?

Paul said, "This is what I want you to ask God." He gave us two specific things. Number one, that God would open the door to speak. Notice it in verse 3. "...that God would open unto us..."—probably Timothy, Epaphras and his other fellow servants with him in Rome—"...a door of utterance." Paul is in prison, in chains, in bonds, yet he doesn't say, "Pray for me that I can get out of jail." That's what I would have written. If this was the first epistle of John Miller to the believers in Menifee and I was in jail, I would say, "Pray that God gets me out of here" or I would say, "Bring me a cake with a file in it."

Don't you love those old cowboy movies where the dude was in jail and the guy would ride up on his horse with his friend's horse, and he would throw a rope through the bars, and he would tie the rope around the bars and then ride off and the wall would come flying out and the prisoner would jump on his horse and ride away. You ask, "What's that got to do with the text?"

"Absolutely nothing." I just love those old cowboy movies. When you spring your buddy out of jail and you pull the whole wall of the jail out and you escape.

That's how I would have prayed; "Come to me. Break me out of this joint." No. He says, "Pray that the door opens for me to preach!" He's in chains, and he's asking them to pray that he could keep proclaiming the Gospel. Notice specifically in the verse 3: "...to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds."

This is what got Paul in prison—preaching. He wants them to pray for him that he can do what got him in jail (and he's in jail); that he can go out and preach the good news of Jesus Christ. He wanted God to open a door for him to preach. I believe that we, as Christians, should ask God to do the same thing. When I get up in the morning and ask God to give me an opportunity to talk to someone about God, He answers that prayer. If you get up in the morning and say, "Okay God. When I'm going about my business on the job or in school or in the neighborhood, open the door of opportunity for me to talk to someone."

A very good, practical tip is when you meet someone during the day, ask them a question or strike up a conversation. I was at the beach one time, and I just got out of the water after surfing. I was in the shower, and a guy pulls up in this really cool car. I'm not a care guy, but I said, "That's a really neat car. What year is that car?" I liked the paint job. We started talking, and the next thing you know, he's asking me a question. "What do you do?"

"I'm a pastor and I preach."

"What do you preach?"

"I preach about Jesus. Let me tell you about Him." And the next thing you know, I'm standing there in the shower in my wetsuit with my surfboard, and I'm sharing the Gospel with this guy. All because I said, "That's a nice car." I could have very easily thought Aw, forget it. I've got to go. So just taking the time to engage people. Start a conversation and then listen to them. Then pray that God will turn the conversation to Jesus Christ.

So Paul said, "Pray that God would open that door." In Romans 1:16, Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" or to the Gentile. So we shouldn't be ashamed. We should ask God to open a door, and we should preach Christ.

So make it clear is the second thing Paul prayed for. He said, in verse 4, "...that I may make it manifest..."—or "clear"—"...as I ought to speak." The NIV translates verse 4, "Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should."

I know that many of you pray for me, and I appreciate it. I covet your prayers. I need your prayers. We should pray for all those who are in a place of spiritual leadership and are preaching the Word of God. Pray that they preach Christ, and pray that they make it clear. Every minister should be preaching Christ Jesus and the Gospel. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly as I should.

How can we make the Gospel clear? Let me give you some simple tips. When you are sharing the Gospel and telling someone about Jesus, at the appropriate time you need to talk about the need for the Gospel. Man is a sinner in need of a Savior. The Bible says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "There is no one righteous; no, not one." For a person to come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, they must realize that they are a sinner in need of a Savior. People can't respond to the Gospel if they don't realize they need the Gospel. So you have to start with the need for the Gospel, because man is a sinner and we've fallen in Adam.

The second aspect of sharing the Gospel clearly is that sin will be judged by God. God is holy and "The wages of sin is death." All have sinned; every one of us has fallen short of God's standard. And "The wages of sin is death." Sin incurs the wrath and judgment of God.

The third element is that in His love, God provided a Savior. So you start with the need for the Gospel and that God will judge. There is a penalty for our sin, but God has provided for our sin

in a Savior, Jesus Christ. You might use John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, the whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." So you don't have to be punished, you don't have to perish and you don't have to be separated from God. God's provided a Savior in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ, Who died on the Cross. Always talk about the meaning of the Cross. Let people know that Jesus died on the Cross for their sins. He took their place. He paid the penalty for their sins.

Then, secondly, don't forget the Resurrection. If Jesus died, we have to have Him raising from the dead to be a Savior. A dead man can save no one. So Jesus died on the Cross, He was buried and then He rose again. Did Jesus really die for our sins? Yes. It's a historic truth. Was Jesus buried? Yes. Did Jesus rise from the dead? Yes. Proclaim it faithfully. Don't debate it. Don't discuss it. Just proclaim it. The death, burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The last element, number four, is that a person must repent and receive or believe in Jesus to be saved. Repentance means that you change your mind about your sin and the life that you're living. You turn to and trust in Jesus Christ.

So you preach the Gospel: Jesus died for your sins, Jesus was buried, He rose again. If you will turn from your sin and trust Jesus Christ, you can be saved by grace through faith. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. Make that clear as you share Jesus Christ with the watching world.

What do we need to do? We need to pray, and we need to pray very specifically. "God, open the door. God, help me to speak. God, help me to make it clear." I sometimes listen to ministers preaching, and I literally don't know what they are saying. I'm thinking I don't know what he's saying. I don't understand it. It's all gobbledygook. One of the best compliments I ever get is someone saying to me, "You make it so clear. You make it real simple."

Last week I got a letter from a nine-year-old, who watches me via the Internet. "Pastor John, I watch you every Sunday. I follow you in my Bible." I made the comment about children in the children's ministry; don't punished them by bringing them in to listen to me. That's why he wrote me this letter. He said, "I understand everything you say, and I like it. Keep preaching from the Bible." A nine-year-old. Wow! I thought, That's so awesome! I want to take the cookies off the shelf and get them down to where the kids can eat them.

Charles Spurgeon used to tell ministers that when Jesus said, "Feed My sheep," that we need to get it down where the sheep are. He didn't say, "Feed My giraffes." Some guys come out of seminary and they're so high and lofty and theologically deep that people say, "That was awesome! I don't know what he said, but it was awesome!" It's got to be simple. When we communicate and when I preach, I encourage you to ask God, "Help Pastor John to make it clear."

Here's the second thing we need to do. We need to walk wisely. So, number one, we need to pray purposefully, and number two, we need to walk wisely. Verse 5 says, "Walk in wisdom

toward them that are without, redeeming the time.” To be an effective witness, we need to walk wisely. People are watching you. If you are going to impact them for the sake of Christ, you must have a life that is consistent with the Gospel.

What is a wise walk? Let me break it down from the text. A wise walk is a consistent, daily walk. The word “walk” in verse 5 is a present active imperative. That means that it is a command in the present tense. It means continually, habitually and ongoing living of the Christian life.

Secondly, a wise walk is walking in wisdom. Notice in verse 5, “Walk in wisdom.” In the Greek it is, “In wisdom walk.” The emphasis is on wisdom. It’s to live cautiously or tactfully, fearing God and obeying His Word. Christians need tact when they witness, when they tell people about Jesus. Not everyone needs to hear the message in the same order or sequence. The content needs to be there, but be sensitive how you share the Gospel with others.

Thirdly, a wise walk before unbelievers is to live beautifully before them. Notice in verse 5, it says, “them that are without.” So we live attractively before the watching world. Why does it describe non-Christians as “them that are without”? Because they are without God and without hope and without salvation and without eternal life.

Notice also that a wise walk is an urgent walk. Paul tells us in verse 5 to be “redeeming the time.” That means buying up every opportunity. Don’t put it off. Why are you waiting to talk to that neighbor or this person at the gas station? Why are you waiting to share with that friend or family member? You never know; they might be killed in an automobile accident. You’d think, I waited and procrastinated. Do you ever notice that when something is on sale, it’s on sale for “today only”? That frustrates me. I think, You’re not going to manipulate me and force me. Some people jump and say, “We gotta go right now!” Or they have all the coupons when they go to the supermarket. They don’t need it, but they have a coupon, so they get it anyway. You go all the way to San Diego to buy a can of corn, because it’s half price. Seize that opportunity. Fifty bucks in gas, but I saved thirty-five cents on a can of corn. But you’re to be buying up or seizing the opportunity. That’s what the phrase “redeeming the time” means.

So number one, we pray purposefully; number two, we walk wisely; and number three, we speak graciously, in verse 6. “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt...”—why?—“...that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” To be effect witnesses, we must pray right, we must live right and we must talk right. The unbelieving world is not only watching us, but they’re listening to us. Our speech should always be gracious. What does that mean? It means that every word that comes out of a Christian’s mouth should be pleasant, attractive, charming and winsome. In studying the word “gracious,” I came up with those synonyms or descriptive terms.

If you look up the word “grace,” it’s “charis,” which is beautiful, lovely and charming. I always thought, by the way, that it’s a great name for a girl. If you’re a parent wanting to know what to name your daughter, how about Grace? Charis. You could call her Charis. It’s a beautiful

name.

Our words are to be gracious. Beautiful words. You know, you can tell where you are spiritually by what comes out of your mouth. What comes out of your mouth comes from your heart. If it's in the well, it comes up in the bucket. That's not Scripture; that's just John Miller 1:1. I can always tell if I need prayer or the Holy Spirit or I need help. It's when things come out of my mouth that shouldn't come out of my mouth. I have to pray, "God, soften my heart. Change my heart. Lord, forgive me. Cleanse me. Give me a pure heart so that pure words come out." James says, "Out of one fountain can fresh water and bitter water both come?" No. It's either going to be bitter, or it's going to be fresh. There is no bitter fresh. So if bitter words come out of your mouth, bitterness is in your heart. If grace comes out of your mouth, grace is in your heart, when you've experienced God's grace. So if you're going to be an effective witness, your speech is always going to be gracious.

Secondly, it should be seasoned with salt, verse 6. Someone said this is Paul's recipe for speech. Take a little grace, and then you sprinkle on a little salt. Salt is pure. Salt speaks of wholesomeness. Our speech should be pure and winsome and wholesome.

And then, thirdly, we should speak with a ready answer. At the end of verse 6 it says, "...that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man." So we need to be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks us the reason for the hope that is in us. We need to do it with gentleness and respect. It's sowing sensitivity in the needs of each individual. It's being sensitive to individuals. Have you ever noticed that when Jesus talked to people, he didn't have one set way of talking to them? He actually catered to each individual need when He shared with them.

He met with the woman in John 4, who was from Samaria, which was a despised race, as far as the Jews were concerned. He sat down on Jacob's well in Sychar, and He's weary, tired and thirsty, and one woman came all by herself with a pot carried on her head. They can carry these pots on their heads without using their hands. Jesus said to her, "Can I have a drink?" That's all He said. She was blown away by that. "How is it that you, being a Jew, would ask me, a Samaritan?"

You say, "What so you mean by 'Samaritan'?" Samaritans were half-breeds. A Samaritan was a half-Jew and a half-Gentile. They were hated. You talk about racial prejudice; Jews hated Samaritans. They were a mixture of Jew and Gentile. They weren't fully Jewish.

She said, "How is it that you, being a Jew, ask me, a woman of Samaria, for a drink? The Jews have no dealings with us Samaritans." Jesus said, "Oh, if only you knew who you were talking to. And if only you knew who I was, you would ask Me for a drink. And I would give you living water." She doesn't understand what this guy's talking about, but she says, "Aah, this is a very deep well, and you have no rope and no bucket. Where are you going to get this water?" She's talking to Jesus. Then Jesus said, "The water that I will give you will be in your soul. It will spring up into everlasting life." Then Jesus said, "Go call your husband." Don't you love how Jesus deals with it? She said, "Well, I don't have a husband." She wants to go back to talk

about the water, not about husbands. Jesus said, “Yes, that’s truth. You don’t have a husband. You’ve had five. And you’re living with a guy right now you aren’t married to.”

She’s thinking Oh, man! Actually, her response was this: “Sir, I perceive you are a prophet.” She’s talking to Jesus, and she says, “Sir, I perceive you are a prophet.” What an amazing thought. She came to drink that living water, and she ran back into the city and brought back the other people from the city.

Notice that Jesus just started by asking her a question: “Can I have a drink?” Ask someone a question. In John 3, Jesus starts a dialogue with Nicodemus, a religious Jew who came by night. Quite the opposite from the sinful woman at the well. What did Jesus say? “Nicodemus, you have to be born again.” Nicodemus said, “How can I be born again? Can I enter into my mother’s womb and be born a second time?” Jesus said, “No. You need to be born of the Spirit. That which is flesh, is flesh. That which is spirit, is spirit. You must be born again to see the kingdom of God.”

In John 8, Jesus is talking to a woman who had been caught in adultery. She had been brought to Jesus, and the religious leaders of the Jews said, “She should be stoned! She was caught in an adulterous act.” Jesus stooped down with His finger and wrote in the sand. That’s a cool tactic for witnessing to somebody. Someone is sitting on the beach, and you just walk up and start doodling in the sand. Jesus said, “Let him who is without sin cast the first stone.” Then they all began to slither away into the crowd. Rabbi Halal all of a sudden realized that he had a dental appointment he had to get to, and Jesus was left alone with the woman. He said to her, “Where are your accusers? Has no one condemned you?” “No man, Lord,” she said. He said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more.” Jesus had tact. He knew how to answer every man.

When the rich young ruler came to Jesus, he asked Jesus, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus said, “Sell everything that you have, and come and follow Me. You’ll have treasures in heaven.” Now you don’t go up to people and do that. You see a guy pull up in a nice car and tell him, “Sell that car and follow Jesus.” Jesus knew what that young man needed, so we need to ask the question, take time to listen to them, find out what their needs are, answer their questions and share Christ tactfully and prayerfully. So we’re walking in wisdom. In 1 Peter 3:15, it says, “Be ready always to give an answer to any man who asks you the reason for the hope that lies in you.” Do it with meekness and respect.

I believe that if every Christian were praying for the lost, praying purposefully, looking for opportunities to witness, walking wisely—walking in wisdom—making sure that your life is consistent with claiming to be a follower of Christ and speaking with grace, seasoned with salt, then if we would go out into the community here in this Temecula Valley—out to the highways and the byways—we would win more people to Jesus Christ.

Let’s pray.