

How to Enhance Your Christian Witness

Intro:

1. Most of us are kind of shy about sharing our faith. We can talk about just about everything else except what is the most important!
1. **ILL: My conversation with Bill Bright.**
2. In essence he said: The duty of a Christian is to concentrate on your own spiritual growth & your relationship to the Lord & Christian service will come as a by product!
3. So - How can you focus in on your Christian development?

Colossians 4:2-6

I. v2-4 - By Continuing in Prayer

- A. Prayer needs to be persistent. **ILL: The Persistent Widow (Lk 18:1-8).**
 1. **Devote yourselves** (προσκαρτερέω) = continue exercising strength in this area, make it a habit.
- **I Thess 5:17-18 - pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.**
 3. You are to be faithful in prayer. **Rom 12:12 - Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.**
 4. **I Sam 12:23** even says that failing to pray is sin!
- B. How is it to be done?
 1. **v2** - By being watchful & thankful & not being anxious. - **Phil 4:6 - Do not be anxious about anything.**
 3. **v12** - Epaphras even wrestled in prayer. **ILL: Jacob wrestled for his petition (Gen 32:24-32).**
- C. What do you pray for?
 1. **v3** - That the mystery of Christ may reach receptive hearts.
 - a. **Rom 16:25** - The mystery is the gospel of Christ.
 - b. **I Cor 15:51** - The mystery refers to the resurrection.
 - c. **Eph 3:6** - The mystery refers to non-Jews (Gentiles) being included in salvation.
 2. **v4** - That your preacher will be able to communicate the word clearly. My brother-in-law's men's group prays for their pastor regularly that he might preach the word accurately.

II. v5 - By Conducting Yourself Wisely

- A. "Your conduct is the only Bible some people will ever read!"
- B. How do you conduct yourself wisely before unbelievers?
 1. You can associate with unbelievers without necessarily condoning what they do.
 2. Concentrate in growing in Christ - allowing the fruit of the Spirit to shine in your life.
 3. Don't be ashamed to exhibit in your life all the biblical principles you have learned so far.
 - a. Show the Lord Jesus in your life in everything that you do.
 - b. Not everyone is capable of being a teacher - but everyone is capable of developing a Christ-like spirit!
- C. Concentrate on being a Christ-like example every opportunity you have.
 1. **Make the most of every opportunity** (τὸν καιρὸν ἐξαγοραζόμενοι) = lit. "purchase the time". Comes from the word "market".
 2. In our busy lives, taking time to be with people is very hard to do - but do it!
 3. A parallel passage is **Eph 5:15-16 - Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.**

III. v6 - By Conversing with Grace

A. So - how do you speak graciously?

1. **Matt 5:37** - Reframe from oaths to enforce a promise.
2. **Matt 12:36** - **But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.** Reframe from careless, useless words.
3. **Prov 10:19** - Reframe from using more words than necessary.
4. **Prov 15:28** - Weigh your answers before you speak them.
5. **Eph 4:29** - Use words that build up - not words that tear down.
6. **Jam 1:19** - Be slow to speak in anger.
7. **Matt 12:34 & Eph 4:25** - Let your words be genuine & truthful.
8. Season your words with salt (salt adds taste!). **ILL: Salt on popcorn.**

B. A gracious answer enhances your testimony by:

1. **Prov 15:1** - Turning away anger.
2. **I Pet 3:15-16** - **But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.**
3. **Prov 16:21** - Promoting instruction.
4. **Prov 22:11** - Becoming influential.

So - when you are shy about sharing your faith verbally, concentrate on developing your Christian character & your personal relationship with Lord Jesus. Beef up your prayer life, be conscious of your behavior before others & always season your conversation with grace. Eventually your witness will bubble over from your committed life!

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