

**Lifestyle Evangelism:
How to Be a Good Christian Witness
Col 4:5-6 Part1**

III. Introduction: How do you spell Fool?

A. The Christian Witness I'm NOT seeing

1. Given the latest economic and political situation, how many Christians do you see
 - a) COMPLETELY CONTENT within the situation
 - b) Can't even call it momentary light affliction because it pales in comparison to Paul's list in Corinthians!
 - c) Instead, simply TRUST the sovereignty of God in their lives and know that EVERYTHING passes through His will.
2. How about the Christian witness I'm NOT seeing in the world in general!
 - a) Honestly, Christians are usually the worst examples
 - b) In the past week alone – swearing, contentiousness, extreme pride, outright sin (and willing to call it that), distrusting God, etc. – ALL in front of the non-Christians!

B. Why talk about our Christian witness? Because THAT is where Paul GOES NEXT in COLOSSIANS!

Col 4:5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity. **6** Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

C. It's going to take us a COUPLE of WEEKS to cover this and today is ENTIRELY INTRODUCTION!

1. Why? We NEED to study WISDOM and FOCUS on WALKING WISELY RIGHT NOW!
2. INSTEAD of spreading FEAR, UNCERTAINTY and DOUBT and DISTRUST of GOD...
3. Let's LIVE OUT LIFESTYLE EVANGELISM – our LIVES as a WITNESS to the unsaved.

D. This section is REAL SIMPLE!

1. Living in the World: Your Conduct with the Unsaved
 - a) General: 5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders,
 - (1) Literally: "In Wisdom walk toward/with outsiders"
 - b) Specific: making the most of the opportunity.
2. Talking with the World: Your Speech with the Unsaved
 - a) General: 6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt,
 - b) Specific: so that you will know how you should respond to each person.
3. **OUR LIVES – Actions and Speech ARE OUR FIRST WITNESS to the UNSAVED!**
 - a) WHAT? What about giving the GOSPEL?

- b) You have to EARN your way PAST the FRONT DOOR of their trust BEFORE give the GOSPEL
- c) The unsaved DON'T KNOW the BIBLE – our theology. They JUDGE by what they see in US
- d) AND – they are everywhere!
 - (1) DO NOT assume Everyone here this morning is Christian – even if they say it
 - (2) DO NOT assume everyone in your different weekly Bible studies or prayer groups are Christian – even if they say it. Etc.

4. LIFESTYLE EVANGELISM is where your witness begins and this begins with WALKING in WISDOM!

E. King Solomon – Probably the best example of a BIBLICAL WISDOM and Foolishness!

F. Blessed by God to be the WISEST MAN to ever live apart from Jesus Christ Himself BUT FELL greatly as he LIVED SO FOOLISHLY

[1 Ki 3:5](#) In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream at night; and God said, “Ask what *you wish* me to give you.” [6](#) Then Solomon said, “You have shown great lovingkindness to Your servant David my father, according as he walked before You in truth and righteousness and uprightness of heart toward You; and You have reserved for him this great lovingkindness, that You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day. [7](#) “Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David, yet I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. [8](#) “Your servant is in the midst of Your people which You have chosen, a great people who are too many to be numbered or counted. [9](#) “So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?” [10](#) It was pleasing in the sight of the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing. [11](#) God said to him, “Because you have asked this thing and have not asked for yourself long life, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have you asked for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself discernment to understand justice, [12](#) behold, I have done according to your words. Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you. [13](#) “I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days.

1. God offered Solomon ANYTHING and he asked for WISDOM! God gave it to Him AND much more!
2. Being WISE didn't keep Solomon from his great fall.
3. What happened?

G. Solomon looks back on his life in Ecclesiastes and tells us:

[Ec 1:13](#) And I set my mind to seek and explore by wisdom concerning all that has been done under heaven. *It is a grievous task which* God has given to the sons of men to be afflicted with. [14](#) I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and striving after wind. [15](#) What is crooked cannot be straightened and what is lacking cannot be counted. [16](#) I said to myself, “Behold, I have magnified and increased wisdom more than all who were over Jerusalem before me; and my mind has observed a wealth of wisdom and knowledge.” [17](#) And I set my mind to know wisdom and

to know madness and folly; I realized that this also is striving after wind. 18 Because in much wisdom there is much grief, and increasing knowledge *results in* increasing pain.

1. Solomon was not CONTENT with ALL GOD given him
2. He saw the FALLEN world, it's emptiness and was not CONTENT with God's ways, God's timing, God's plan for him
3. SO – ALTHOUGH KNOWING what was WISE, he chose to test it IN THE WORLD
 - a) EMPIRICALLY, he CHECKED it OUT!
 - b) Like my favorite bumper sticker: All I ever wanted in life is to PROVE that money can't buy happiness!
 - c) That's what Solomon did!
 - d) God said the world wouldn't satisfy and Solomon set out to prove it!
 - e) NOT the WAY God intended it!

H. What did Solomon REALIZE?

[Ec 2:15](#) Then I said to myself, "As is the fate of the fool, it will also befall me. ...

→Solomon: I've been a FOOL!

I. What did Solomon CONCLUDE at the end of his life?

[Ec 12:13](#) The conclusion, when all has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments, because this *applies to every person*. 14 For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

→Solomon – obey God!

J. Dick Mayhue wrote:

What a sad commentary on such a distinguished person's life. Looking back, he undoubtedly remembered the promises; Solomon surely recalled the precepts that he previously affirmed as true in Proverbs, but failed to practice and thus misdirected the wisdom God gave him. So he wrote Ecclesiastes to say, in effect, "People, learn from me! Life is empty, it brings tears to my eyes and pain to my heart. Be warned. Don't walk where I walked. Don't live as I lived. Accept God's wisdom by faith; don't test it. Use it with an eternal perspective to know good rather than with an earthly view to know the pain and folly of evil." The only true wisdom that is satisfying, valuable and has eternal worth comes from God alone to be deployed in human efforts that put His glory on display."

IV. A Biblical Perspective on Wisdom

A. Bible has MUCH to say on topic – especially the OT.

B. KEY to understanding: Forget world's definition of wisdom! NOT God's definition!

1. Even back at the time of the OT and NT, the meaning of wisdom differed.
2. Good example: Greeks vs. Hebrews
 - a) Greeks: wisdom = head knowledge = philosophy
 - (1) No practical application at all

(2) = intellectuals / philosophers

(3) WISDOM = you know a lot and think a lot!

b) Hebrews: wisdom = knowledge + action

(1) = godly living = godly knowledge + associated godly behavior.

(2) see meaning developed and used in Scripture!

C. *“Wisdom” is used in many ways in OT.*

D. *FIRST use: SKILL in TECHNICAL WORK*

1. Right from the start there is NOTHING THEORETICAL about “wisdom”

2. wisdom = technical skill – ESPECIALLY with hands.

a) E.g. Bazalel – Leading artisan of the Temple

[Ex 35:31](#) “And He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding and in knowledge and in all craftsmanship; [32](#) to make designs for working in gold and in silver and in bronze, [33](#) and in the cutting of stones for settings and in the carving of wood, so as to perform in every inventive work. [34](#) “He also has put in his heart to teach, both he and Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. [35](#) “He has filled them with skill to perform every work of an engraver and of a designer and of an embroiderer, in blue and in purple and in scarlet material, and in fine linen, and of a weaver, as performers of every work and makers of designs.

b) Ezekial 27:8-9

[Eze 27:8](#) “The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers; Your wise men, O Tyre, were aboard; they were your pilots. [9](#) “The elders of Gebal and her wise men were with you repairing your seams; All the ships of the sea and their sailors were with you in order to deal in your merchandise →Rowers, pilots, seam repairers – WISE men!

→wisdom = knowing and doing in technical skill

E. *SECOND use: WISDOM in DISCERNMENT / DECISIONS with PEOPLE*

1. Joseph in Genesis

[Ge 41:38](#) Then Pharaoh said to his servants, “Can we find a man like this, in whom is a divine spirit?” [39](#) So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has informed you of all this, there is no one so discerning and wise as you are. [40](#) “You shall be over my house, and according to your command all my people shall do homage; only in the throne I will be greater than you.”

2. Tribal Leaders under Moses (Moses speaking to Israel)

[Dt 1:13](#) ‘Choose wise and discerning and experienced men from your tribes, and I will appoint them as your heads.’ [14](#) “You answered me and said, ‘The thing which you have said to do is good.’ [15](#) “So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and appointed them heads over you, leaders of thousands and of hundreds, of fifties and of tens, and officers for your tribes.

a) Leaders = the Grey hairs!

b) Know God AND His ways! More than just the old!

c) = Godly Men by the TESTIMONY of their LIFE!

3. David was called wise (2 Sam 14:20)
4. Solomon was the wisest man after Christ
5. Daniel was wise (Dan 5:11).

F. Whole Section of the OT called “WISDOM LITERATURE!”

1. = God’s PLAN for LIFE –what we must KNOW and must LIVE!

G. NT: How does NT teach us WISDOM?

1. A: We learn Wisdom THROUGH Jesus CHRIST
[1 Co 1:30](#) But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,
2. Do you want Wisdom?
3. First – have to have Christ in you – be saved
4. Second – LEARN the person of Christ and you learn wisdom!
5. Was Christ wiser than Solomon? You BET!

[Mt 12:42](#) “The Queen of the South (=Queen of Sheba) will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

a) That “something” = Jesus Christ!

6. You can state: Jesus Christ is the FULFILLMENT of the OT WISDOM BOOKS!

a) ALL the wisdom of Solomon (and more) is found in Christ!

b) BTW – the 3 key wisdom books: Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes. Some Psalms are considered wisdom literature (e.g. Ps. 119)

H. How THEN do we DEFINE “WISDOM”

1. From the OT : On the basis of knowledge, understanding, and discernment, being able to draw the proper distinction. One is able to make a biblically skillful decision and put it into action.
2. From the NT: Knowing Jesus Christ and on the basis of your knowledge of Him, your understanding of His teachings / His person, you are able to exercise Christ-like discernment and conduct. You know what Christ knows, decide what Christ would decide and do what Christ would do in any given situation!

V. Construction of Ephesians 5:15-6:9 (especially 5:15-21).

A. Eph 4-6 = APPLICATION section = WALK

1. Walk in Unity (4:1-16)
[Eph 4:1](#) **Therefore** I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to **walk** in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,
2. Walk in Holiness (4:17-32)
[Eph 4:17](#) **So this I say**, and affirm together with the Lord, that you **walk** no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,...[25](#) **Therefore**, laying aside falsehood,

3. Walk in Love (5:1-6)

Eph 5:1 **Therefore** be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and **walk** in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

4. Walk in Light (5:7-14)

Eph 5:7 **Therefore** do not be partakers with them; 8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; **walk** as children of Light

5. Walk in Wisdom (5:15-6:9)

Eph 5:15 **Therefore** be careful how you **walk**, not as unwise men but as wise,

6. Stand Firm in Warfare (6:10-20)

Eph 6:10 **Finally**, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to **stand firm** against the schemes of the devil.

VI. Paul's Prayer of Petition – NEVER go to APPLICATION WITHOUT PRAYER!
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A. LAST Couple of Weeks in COLOSSIANS – we've been studying Prayer!

1. Here's a PRAYER we MUST KNOW and PRAY
2. For OTHERS and For OURSELVES
3. I ask that you pray this prayer DAILY for every Christian you know!
4. Why? This what PAUL PRAYED BEFORE 3 chapters on the CHRISTIAN WALK
5. And – he didn't just write it here – HE WAS ACTUALLY praying this and just puts it on paper here
6. And – yes – WISDOM is a big part of it!
7. And – yes – it's my favorite prayer in the Bible

B. Eph 3:16-21

Eph 3:16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; *and* that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. 20 Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, 21 to Him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

C. This is a PRAYER of PETITION – ASKING God!
D. FIRST - That we may know the PERSON OF GOD

v.16...while making mention *of you* in my prayers; 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

1. "may give to you a spirit" = Spiritual quality / attitude/ energy that goes with it
2. Notice what is then asked for FIRST...
3. "of wisdom" = KNOWLEDGE of God and SKILL in GODLY Living.

4. [“and of revelation in the knowledge of Him”](#)
 - a) = insight and discernment the Spirit brings into the mysteries of divine truth.
 - b) = more FULLY UNDERSTAND and HAVE INSIGHT to the WORK of GOD in Christ (O’Brien)
 - c) [“and of revelation”](#) = “to reveal / lay bare”
 - (1) = insight and discernment the Holy Spirit brings into the mysteries of divine truth!
 - d) [“in the knowledge”](#)
 - (1) = SUPER, DEEP knowledge
 - (2) Word with a PREPOSITION on the FRONT – EPI- Knowledge
 - e) [“of HIM”](#) = OF JESUS CHRIST!
 - f) Paul is first praying the God would enable you to KNOW HIM MORE
 - (1) More WISDOM
 - (2) More UNDERSTANDING
 - (3) More INSIGHT
 - (4) INTO CHRIST and HIS WORK!
5. WHOLE FLOW EMPHASIZES KNOWLEDGE of God - PUT into ATTITUDE and ACTION = **WISDOM!**
 - a) Knowledge = “revelation in the knowledge of Him”
 - b) Action = [“WISDOM”](#) = SKILLED GODLY LIVING
 - c) Attitude = [“A SPIRIT of”](#)
6. Application – Knowledge of God VITAL to Christians LIVING WISELY!
 - a) You tell me YOUR KNOWLEDGE of CHRIST / GOD and I’ll tell you WHERE your FAITH and TRUST in CHRIST is Strong / WEAK
 - b) If your view of God is NOT SOVEREIGN
 - (1) You CANNOT trust God to
 - (a) Save people
 - (b) Work all things for good
 - (c) Control history to His Ends...
 - (2) All will depend on Man’s Sovereign choices
 - c) If your view of God is NOT ALL Loving, ALL merciful, ...
 - (1) You won’t trust Him FULLY in TRIALS
 - (2) You’ll HAVE to TAKE THINGS INTO YOUR OWN HANDS to MAKE SURE you’re OK in the end
 - d) YOUR FAITH, TRUST, OBEDIENCE to CHRIST is DIRECTLY RELATED to HOW MUCH YOU KNOW HIM
 - (1) More you know Him, more you trust and obey
 - (2) The more you WAIT on HIS PERFECT WILL
 - (3) The more you DON’T TAKE THINGS INTO YOUR OWN HANDS.
 - e) Your SPIRITUAL MATURITY / LIVING GODLY / **LIVING WISELY** is DIRECTLY RELATED to

- (1) How BIG your view of God is
- (2) How MUCH you KNOW GOD THROUGH CHRIST.
- 7. SO PAUL HAS PRAYED – God, I HAVE TOLD THEM ABOUT YOU and YOUR SON
 - a) PLEASE GIVE THEM
 - (1) The KNOWLEDGE of HIM
 - (2) The UNDERSTANDING of HIM
 - (3) IN ORDER THAT they LIVE CHRIST-LIKE
 - (a) = **live as WISE men and women.**
- 1. What is Eph 1-3? A: KNOWLEDGE / UNDERSTANDING
 - a) Of WHAT God has DONE for US in CHRIST!
 - b) KNOWLEDGE necessary to LIVE GODLY, CHRIST-CENTERED LIVES = WALKING in WISDOM!

E. *Second Petition: That we may know our POSITION IN CHRIST*

- 18 *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,*
1. *I pray that the eyes of your heart*
 - a) Paul uses “eyes” SO THAT he CAN SAY that GOD NEEDS TO OPEN THEM!
 - b) “heart” = center of Your UNDERSTANDING, INTELLECT, WILL, THOUGHTS
 2. *may be enlightened*
 - a) Literally the verb “to give light”
 - (1) Why he says TO GIVE LIGHT to YOUR EYES of your heart.
 - (2) Speaking metaphorically
 - b) Verb TENSE very special
 - (1) “enlightening” began in the past and continues on and on...
 - (2) When? At salvation!
 - (3) Since SALVATION, GOD has ANSWERED HIS PRAYER
 - (4) Ministry of the Holy SPIRIT is to BRING YOU UNDERSTANDING of the things of God!
 - c) Paul’s Prayer – GOD OPEN their EYES to let SPIRITUAL LIGHT give them UNDERSTANDING, KNOWLEDGE! Why?
 3. *so that you will know*
 - a) “so that” = PURPOSE
 - b) “you will know” = LOOKS FORWARD
 4. Know 3 things! – THREE CLAUSES
 - a) TWO relate to our POSITION in CHRIST
 - b) ONE relates to the POWER of God in Christ – WHICH FULFILLS EVERYTHING from v.3-HERE!
 5. KNOW – our POSITION in CHRIST...
 - a) *what is the hope of His calling,*

- (1) We have talked much about Biblical hope!
- (2) Is NOT the world's kind of Hope!
- (3) HOPE here = COMPLETION of our SALVATION!
- (4) Notice: it is the hope "[of His Calling](#)"
 - (a) CALLING = CALLING ALL THE WAY to GLORIFICATION!
- (5) Paul is PRAYING – GOD open their understanding to the FULLNESS of their POSITION in CHRIST
 - (a) THE FINAL GLORIFICATION
 - (b) THE FINAL COMPLETION of SALVATION!
 - (c) That being IN CHRIST means a FINAL POSITION of CHRIST-LIKENESS!

b) [what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.](#)

- (1) REMEMBER – In Eph 1 we are talking about God's INHERITANCE of US!
- (2) Remember v.11 REALLY says "[we have been obtained AS AN INHERITANCE](#)"
- (3) NOT our INHERITANCE at glorification
- (4) Paul's Prayer – GOD open their understanding to KNOW what GREAT THINGS it MEANS to be INHERITED BY GOD!
- (5) = that they may understand v.11-14!
- (6) = understand the EXTRAORDINARY VALUE placed on you by GOD
 - (a) TO be put IN CHRIST
 - (b) TO be a GIFT to CHRIST
 - (c) TO be made CHRIST-LIKE
 - (d) TO be used by God TO HONOR and ADORE His SON for ALL ETERNITY!

6. Paul's Prayer- GOD open their UNDERSTANDING to the POSITION you have GIVEN THEM IN CHRIST!

- a) THIS POSITION of CHRIST-LIKENESS
 - (1) Now in their redeemed souls
 - (2) Future in the redeemed bodies
- b) ALL The SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS of this CALLING!
- c) AND WHAT it MEANS to be AN INHERITANCE of GOD
 - (1) To Have the RICHES of HIS GLORY on YOU
 - (2) To be POSSESSED by HIM
 - (3) To be GIVEN to HIS SON. And on and on.

7. Why do you need to KNOW this? Turn to Eph 4:1!

- a) WITH this UNDERSTANDING, you then the NEED to WALK in WISDOM!
- b) Paul can CALL you TO OBEY
 - (1) BECAUSE KNOW WHAT you have been GIVEN!
 - (2) You UNDERSTAND and WANT to RESPOND!

F. Third Petition: That they may know the POWER OF GOD

19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. ...

1. = POWER of GOD that MAKES REAL His GREAT PURPOSES in CHRIST from 1:3-14
2. From HERE to the end of Chapter 3 we WILL SEE THE POWER OF GOD as it is MANIFESTED – made real – in time / in the world.
3. Paul Prays we will KNOW “what is the surpassing greatness of His power”
 - a) “surpassing” = Literally “throwing beyond”= beyond measuring, calculation
 - b) “Surpassing greatness”
 - (1) = NOTHING GREATER THAN THIS!
 - (2) GREATEST:BEYOND MEASURING and calculating!
 - c) Of what? HIS POWER! = Dunamas = DYNAMITE!
 - d) Paul – Prays that we understanding that the power behind God’s purpose
 - (1) IS UNMATCHED POWER
 - (2) UNMEASUREABLE POWER
 - e) And where is all of this power FOCUSED?
 - 1:19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.
 - (1) YES! TOWARD US WHO BELIEVE!
4. THIS PRAYER - Beyond my ability to comprehend...
5. BUT – NOT BEYOND MY ABILITY TO APPLY!
 - a) IF I KNOW and WILLING to TRUST God’s POWER
 - b) THEN I will be willing to WALK in WISDOM / live godly!
 - c) I’ll KNOW His way /His power will work FAR BETTER than my way/my power.

G. THIS PRAYER is SO IMPORTANT today –

1. Individuals and the CHURCH today NEED this PRAYER ANSWERED DESPERATELY to LIVE WISELY!!
2. Church today – BYPASSING DEEP THINGS of GOD – not LIVING WISELY
3. Even – the so-called MATURE church is NOT facing the economic/political reality of this country WITH WISDOM
4. SO – the Church is TRYING to
 - a) Live the Christian Life / Run the race
 - b) Fight the good fight / Do what Jesus would do
 - c) WITHOUT the NECESSARY SPIRITUAL BASE to WALK in WISDOM.
5. START by PRAYING for UNDERSTANDING, then we’ll LEARN to LIVE WISELY - Christ-like and be Pleasing to Him!

H. Look at V.20-21 – we’re not going to study those now BUT

20 Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, 21 to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

1. Do you believe this? Do you live your life TRUSTING in HIS POWER?
2. Do you LIVE 100% Godly – KNOWING that His way is the ONLY way?