

**Lifestyle Evangelism:
How to Be a Good Christian Witness
Col 4:5-6 Part 7**

I. Introduction

A. TURN TO Passage to read...

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.

II. Living in the World: Your Conduct with the Unsaved

Col 4:5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity

A. Literally: "In Wisdom walk toward/with outsiders"

B. 2 parts: General command / Specific command

C. General: 5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders,

1. with wisdom = Emphatic Position = emphasis/most important point of phrase
2. 5 Conduct yourselves = Walk = Paul's favorite verb
 - a) = Your WHOLE LIFE of ACTIONS
 - b) = "Live every moment of your life before the unsaved in a godly manner"
3. "toward outsiders" = Unbelievers / Non-Christians

D. Specific: making the most of the opportunity.

1. "making the most of" = redeeming"
2. "the opportunity" = kairon NOT chronos
 - a) NOT = CHRONOLOGICAL TIME
 - b) = PURPOSE of time = OPPORTUNITY that TIME gives
 - c) = "redeeming our opportunities" = GRABBING UP INTENSIVELY THE OPPORTUNITIES that the LORD GIVES us TO SERVE HIM!

E. Command to Walk in Wisdom (5:15)

Eph 5:15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, **16** making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

1. "be careful how you walk" = be exact, be accurate, be diligent = Watching each footstep – placing each carefully
2. not as unwise men but as wise – come back to
3. 16 making the most of your time,
 - a) "making the most of" = redeeming" =
 - (1) "time" = = PURPOSE of time = OPPORTUNITY that TIME gives
 - b) = "redeeming our opportunities"
 - (1) = GRABBING UP INTENSELY THE OPPORTUNITIES that the LORD GIVES us TO SERVE HIM!

F. How to Walk in Wisdom: Three Contrasts

not as unwise men but as wise, 17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,

1. 3 contrasts tell us HOW to walk in Wisdom!

2. WISE-WALK: not as unwise men but as wise,

- a) Draws upon biblical basis of understanding wisdom
- b) “wisdom” = godly life = Knowledge + ACTION
- c) “unwise” = “without wisdom” = Knowledge without action = Lack of knowledge so action not possible
- d) Will now say same thing in different way... = REPETITION for EMPHASIS and clarity/different perspective

3. WILL-WALK: 17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

- a) do not be foolish, = MORON = “does not use rational powers” = BRAINLESS
- b) “foolish” = BY CONTRAST = “NOT understanding what the will of the Lord is”
 - (1) = FUNCTIONING APART from God’s will
 - (2) = Acting like an non-Christian, worldly”
- c) BUT understanding what the will of the Lord is
 - (1) “understanding” = USING your BRAIN!
 - (2) Understanding = YOUR REASONING POWER
 - (3) = comprehend, gain insight = UNDERSTAND
 - (4) what the will of the Lord is = BL: WILL of the LORD = OBEY COMMANDS and PRINCIPLES of Scripture and you will be WISE!

4. Spirit-filled Walk!

Eph 5:18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,

- a) “And” leads us into a SPECIFIC explanation of HOW to not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is!
 - (1) Paul – Let me give you FURTHER explanation... SPECIFICALLY,...
- b) 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation,
 - (1) Eph 5:18=RELIGIOUS drunkenness in PAGAN religions!
 - (2) Pagan worship had a lot of SEX and DRINKING
 - (a) Why? Believed: A HIGHER STATE of ECSTASY and EMOTION MEANT a HIGHER ABILITY to COMMUNE with the gods!
 - (3) V.18 “drunk” = compound = “after” + “to sacrifice”
 - (a) = common practice of drunkenness after pagan sacrifices
 - (b) SO – Greek word “drunk” LITERALLY is just a description “that which you did with wine after you sacrificed”!
 - (c) CONTINUAL form = PROHIBITION against the condition of drunkenness

- (4) “for that is dissipation” =
- (a) = DESTROY yourself by your lifestyle
 - (b) SO – Drunkenness dissipates, DESTROYS you / life.
- (5) Drunkenness was a THEOLOGICAL problem!
- (6) Paul: DON'T GET HIGH to GET CLOSER to GOD!
- (a) That's NOT WISDOM!- That's FOOLISHNESS!
 - (b) That's NOT the WILL of the LORD!
 - (c) THAT MERELY DESTROYS YOU! (dissipation)
 - (d) Paul – GETTING DRUNK is NOTHING more than DESTRUCTION!
- c) but be filled with the Spirit.
- (1) “Spirit” = Holy Spirit
 - (2) Key: what does “be filled” mean?!!!
 - (3) “be filled” word that has the idea of PERMEATING and CONTROLLING, DOMINATING.
 - (a) Think about it – when you talk about drinking, you don't focus on the physical act of pouring wine down your throat and “filling” your stomach!
 - (b) You focus on EFFECT it has on you – IT CONTROLS you.
 - (c) Same thing here – “be filled” = give yourself over 100% (idea of filling) to COMPLETE CONTROL of the HOLY SPIRIT!
 - (d) SO - “filled” = CONTROLLED.
 - (e) Command is Continuous: “Keep being filled CONTINUOUSLY”
 - (f) =PASSIVE – You don't Fill! – Holy Spirit does!
 - (i) Your part is to be FILLABLE! I.e. Controllable!
 - (ii) IOW – You let yourself be CONTROLLED by the Holy Spirit!
 - (4) Last time – looked at two key parallel passages to fully understand being controlled by the Spirit
 - (a) Col 3:16
 - (b) Gal 5:16-25
- d) EVERYTHING we've seen in this passage about WALKING in WISDOM = CONTROL!
- (1) V.15 be CAREFUL how you walk = watch EVERY SINGLE step
 - (2) “make the most of time” = seize EVERY opportunity
 - (3) “understand what the will of the Lord is”
 - (4) Now – don't get drunk with wine BUT BE CONTROLLED by the HOLY SPIRIT!
 - (5) COMMON THREAD = Christian LIFE is a CONTROLLED LIFE= DISCIPLINED life
 - (a) = Life LED by BRAIN,
 - (i) FILLED with KNOWLEDGE and Holy Spirit,

- (ii) FUELED with UNDERSTANDING,
- (iii) FOLLOWED by OBEDIENCE!
- (b) Led by God's will, Controlled by His Holy Spirit, Living like Him (=wisdom)
- (6) What is unwise living? What is foolishness? What is drunkenness? A: OPPOSITE of ALL THAT!
 - (a) Loss of Physical control
 - (b) Loss of emotional control
 - (c) Loss of MORAL CONTROL
 - (d) Living under control of world, not God's will
 - (e) NO CONTROL!
- (7) BL: False Religion ALWAYS takes you in the OPPOSITE DIRECTION God EXPECTS you to GO!

G. Conclusion I've reached =

1. You can ONLY IMPACT the UNSAVED with wise living / godly living / living in wisdom

- a) Why "ONLY"? A: because ONLY 2 ways to live
 - (1) WISELY
 - (2) WORLDLY
- b) And – IF worldly, you look JUST LIKE THEM and there is no IMPACT
- c) Isn't that the "bottom line" here?
- d) Jesus said it in a negative

[Jn 15:19](#) "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.
- 2. Corollary: IF you are not impacting the world / not drawing attention for godly reasons – THEN you are not living WISELY BUT are living WORLDY
- 3. One other conclusion:

[Tit 1:16](#) They profess to know God, but by *their* deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

 - a) Disobedience is the strongest statement of non-belief!
 - b) = POWERFUL PROVE of unbelief

4. You LIFE / your actions CARRY MORE WEIGHT THAN YOUR WORDS

- a) What is the idiom that acknowledges this?
- b) ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS
 - (1) = Actions are more powerful communicators than words!
- c) Titus 1:16 – You can PROFESS all you want, but by your "deeds" you will either deny God or glorify Him

III. Talking with the World: Your Speech with the Unsaved

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.

A. Again – general and specific!

B. General: 6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt,

1. “Let your speech” = “The word of you” = “your word” = EVERY SINGLE WORD of yours!
2. “always” = ALWAYS!!!
 - a) = HABITUAL! Home, work, friends, church,...
 - b) Good times, bad times, neutral times
 - c) ALWAYS!
 - d) IF you ALWAYS doing something, you know NO OTHER WAY to DO IT. – There is NO SLIPPING UP!
3. be with grace,
 - a) Usually see “grace” as God’s grace TO US
 - b) Do you know the difference between mercy and grace?
 - (1) Mercy = NOT giving us what WE DESERVE
 - (2) Grace = giving us what WE DON’T DESERVE
 - c) Point: as those who have been SHOWN GRACE, we must ALWAYS SHOW GRACE in our SPEECH
 - d) How does that affect speech? WE TREAT OTHERS IN A WAY THAT THEY DON’T DESERVE!
 - e) Who is our perfect example? Jesus Christ! Here He is AND Specifically called out for us to follow...

1 Pe 2:20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. 21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22 WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; 23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;
 - f) During His life, Jesus was “gracious” in His speech:

Lk 4:22 And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, “Is this not Joseph’s son?”
 - g) BUT - What did Jesus say that was perhaps the MOST gracious words He ever uttered?

Lk 23:34 But Jesus was saying, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”...

- h) In our sister letter to Ephesians, Paul calls for gracious speech IN CONTRAST to unwholesome!
- [Eph 4:29](#) Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.
- i) Peter said it:
- [1 Pe 3:15](#) but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;
- (1) “[gentleness and reverence](#)” = grace!
- j) SO – Let your speech ALWAYS be with grace BUT also / in addition:
4. [though seasoned with salt,](#)
- a) = [Prepared, purifying, provisioning!](#)
- b) [Prepared](#) = Carefully thought through so that you have a prepared answer / prepared words
- (1) When seasoning food with salt you DON'T Dump the salt shaker – you CAREFULLY put a MEASURED amount that you've learned and practiced
- c) [Purifying](#) = Our speech should CHANGE CONVERSATION from worldly / unholy TO HOLY and purifying
- (1) Salt is used to clean/purify/preserve – our words should do the same!
- d) [Provisioning](#) = Our speech should PROVIDE something helpful, worthwhile!
- (1) NOT empty clichés and sound bites
- (2) SOMETHING EDIFYING (like Eph 4:29 says!)
- e) Do you take the time/care/concern to speak to others – prepared, purifying and provisioning? ALWAYS?
- f) And do they deserve that? NO! That's why Paul said it is “speech with grace!”
5. Let's pull this all together with Paul's last phrase –the PURPOSE of Speech with grace, seasoned with salt...
- C. [Specific: so that you will know how you should respond to each person.](#)**
1. [“so that you will know”](#) = “to the end that you know” – Looks to the RESULT of your speech
- a) Paul – don't be focused on just your purpose – focus RESULTS with your SPEECH
- b) IOW – am what I am GOING to SAY achieve the RESULT I want?
- (1) OR DID What I SAY achieve the RESULT I wanted / Intended?
- c) The next phrase really brings this into focus clearly!
2. [how you should respond to each person.](#)
- a) Your RESULT is SPECIFIC for the PERSON you are TALKING TO!
- b) What's the first obvious thing here? A: No cookie-cutter, standard answers thrown at people
- c) How do we often do that? A: TOSS a BIBLE VERSE in their FACE or ABRUPTLY cut them off with a std answer

- d) “[respond](#)” = answer
- (1) =Your speech SHOULD FOCUS on the “RESULT” of giving EACH SPECIFIC PERSON the ANSWER God would want them to have!
 - (2) Know God’s answer
 - (3) Know how to APPLY IT TO THEM
 - (4) Know how to construct it so that they will understand!
 - (5) Stay with them all the WAY to RESULT that they understand the ANSWER!
3. Paul – NO quick, superficial, worldly speech!
- a) EVERY word matters / EVERYTHING is GAUGED for IMPACT
 - b) ALWAYS focused on the individual
 - c) You can’t do this without GREAT growth and care on your part!
 - d) Christians CANNOT be awkward conversationalists and obey this verse!
 - e) Christians CANNOT be HARSH, HARD-to-APPROACH!
 - f) Christians CANNOT be POOR LISTENERS who do all the talk – you won’t know what is BEST FOR EACH PERSON!

IV. CONCLUSION

A. REMEMBER – we’ve called this section “lifestyle evangelism” – EVERYTHING we DO and SAY is our witness

1. What more primary purpose do you have on EARTH than to bring others to Christ?

B. If you told me you were a baseball player, I’d assume

1. You wanted to be the best possible
2. You’d learn, practice, be the best at batting and fielding...
3. I’d see you learning and practicing those all the time?
4. I’d see you in games doing those all the time with great skill and expertise
5. You’d know how spot and respond to every kind of pitch
6. You’d know how to handle every kind of ball hit to you – grounders, flies, etc.
7. You’d know exactly where to throw the ball based on men on base, etc.

C. So, you tell me you’re a Christian, I’d assume

1. You want to be the best possible (2 Cor 5:9!)
2. You want to be the best at your conduct and you’re speech for lifestyle evangelism!
3. I’d see you learning and practicing all the time to live in wisdom, speak with grace seasoned with salt.
4. I’d see you out in life doing those things with great skill and expertise
5. People would look at you and say – CHRISTIAN! And, an expert too.
6. People would hear you and say – he/she speaks with such grace – always!
7. Always PREPARED in what they say
8. Always PURIFYING (making the conversation holy)
9. Always PROVISIONING – providing value – EDIFYING, HELPFUL!
10. Always leaving EACH person KNOWING that they had been PERSONALLY and EXACTLY answered for them!

D. Whenever I study a passage concerning our witness to non-Christians, I'm always drawn to Titus 3 where Paul says it SO clearly:

Tit 3: 1 Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, (conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders) ***2*** to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. (your speech!) ***3*** For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.

E. There's a reason I spent 11 weeks on Christian COMMUNICATION 18 months ago –

1. The Bible has MUCH to say on it!
2. We NEED it desperately!

F. Take Paul's words today to the Colossians and live them EVERYWHERE in your life!