**Sermon Title: The Priority of Christ in Public Life**

**Sermon Text: Colossians 4:2-6**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to the qualities of transformed speech in conversation and lifestyle.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 4 qualities evident in the New Man’s speech.**

**Introduction:**

**I. The persistent prayer of the new man’s speech. V.2**

**II. The powerful proclamation of the new man’s speech. Vv.3-4**

**III. The personal performance of the new man’s speech. V.5**

**IV. The passionate purity of the new man’s speech. V.6**

**I. The persistent prayer of the new man’s speech. V.2**

 A. The exhortation to **devoted** prayer. V.2a

 Proskartereo, “to be steadfast” or “to endure.” The verb means “to be courageously persistent” “to hold fast and not let go.”

 B. The exhortation to keep **persisting** in prayer. V.2b

 1. Pray at all times (**Ephesians 6:18; Luke 18:1**)

 2. Pray without ceasing. (**1 Thessalonians 5:17**)

 3. Be devoted to prayer.

 **Romans 12:12** rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;

 **Acts 1:14** These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication1, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

 **Acts 2:42** And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

 True prayer often involves struggle and grappling with God, proving to Him the deepest concern of one’s heart, in relationship to God’s will.

 Such prayer gives the believer a Holy Spirit boldness to pray earnestly when convinced of God’s will.

 C. The exhortation to **stay alert** in prayer. V.2c

 The idea is to stay awake and alert referring to the mental attitude of expectancy and watchfulness.

 **Matthew 26:40-41** Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, "What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? **41** "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak."

 In the broader sense is the idea of staying alert for specific needs about which to pray, rather than vagueness and unfocused prayer.

 D. The exhortation to be thankful in praying. V.2d

 There is to be an attitude of gratitude or thanksgiving.

 1. Believers are to be thankful for **salvation**. (**1:12**)

 2. Believers are to be thankful for **growth**. (**2:6**)

 3. Believers are to be thankful for fellowship with Christ and His Church. (**3:15**)

 4. Believers are to be thankful for the opportunity to **serve**. (**3:17**)

 5. Believers are to be thankful for God’s answers to prayers according to His will.

**II. The powerful proclamation of the new man’s speech. Vv.3-4**

 A. Praying for the **messengers**. V.3a

 B. Praying for an open door of proclamation. V.3b

 An “open door” was a common expression for an opportunity for someone to do something.

 **Acts 14:27** Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

 **1 Corinthians 16:9** For a great and effective door has opened to me, and *there are* many adversaries.

 **2 Corinthians 2:12** Furthermore, when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord,

 Paul asked believers to intercede for him and others so that he would continue to spread the gospel.

 **Revelation 3:7** "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write,`These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens1":

 **Acts 16:9-10** And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." **10** Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

 C. Praying for boldness to speak the mystery of Christ. V.3c

 1. The preeminence of Christ in prayer.

 2. The preeminence of Christ in creation.

 3. The preeminence of Christ in redemption/reconciliation.

 4. The preeminence of Christ in the church.

 5. The preeminence of Christ in liberty of the believer.

 6. The preeminence of Christ in sanctification/new man.

 D. Praying for the **result** of proclamation. V.3d

 His imprisonment tested his resilience to seize opportunities for proclaiming Christ.

 1. He evangelized the mob in Jerusalem. (**Acts 22:1ff**)

 2. He evangelized the Governor Felix. (**Acts 24:10ff**)

 3. He evangelized Herod Agrippa. (**Acts 26:1ff**)

 4. He evangelized the Roman Soldier. (**Philippians 1:13**)

 5. He evangelized the members of Caesar’s Household. (**Philippians 4:22**)

 E. And pray that I may speak as I should, in a way that makes the message clear. V.4a

 F. Praying for the **right** proclamation. V.4b

 Clearly, boldly (**Ephesians 6:19**), wisely (**Proverbs 25:11**), graciously (**Ephesians 4:15**).

**III. The personal performance of the new man’s speech. V.5**

 A. The personal performance **walk**. V.5a

 B. The personal performance **wisdom**. V.5b

 Wisdom involves properly evaluating circumstances and making godly decisions. Believers are to display a carefully planned, consistent, righteous Christian life.

 (**Colossians 1:9-10; Colossians 2:1-3**)

 C. The personal performance toward the **wicked**. V.5c

 This refers to unbelievers.

 **Ephesians 5:15-16** See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, **16** redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

 Christians are called to live in a way that establishes the validity of and credibility of the Christian faith and preeminence of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that as a result we make the most of every evangelistic opportunity for us and others.

 **1 Corinthians 5:12-13** For what *have* I *to do* with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? **13** But those who are outside God judges. Therefore "put away from yourselves the evil person."

 **1 Thessalonians 4:12** that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and *that* you may lack nothing.

 **1 Timothy 3:7** Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

 D. The personal performance in light of the watch. V.5d

 The phrase “making the most or redeeming the time” comes from the verb meaning “buy up” as if finding a bargain. Here it conveys the idea of making the most of one’s time spent with unbelievers, so make full use of every opportunity.

 **Psalm 90:12** So teach *us* to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.

 **John 9:4** "Imust work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; *the* night is coming when no one can work.

 **Romans 13:11-14** And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed. **12** The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. **13** Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. **14** But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.

**IV. The passionate purity of the new man’s speech. V.6**

 A. The passionate purity of **general** conversation. V.6a

 There is no place for speech or conversation that characterizes the unredeemed mouth. Whether going through persecution, stress, difficulty, or injustice, no matter the audience.

 B. The passionate purity of **gracious** conversation. V.6b

 The believer’s conversation and lifestyle should always be gracious and interesting. Gracious speech should be habitual for the believer. Gracious speech has these qualities:

 1. spiritual

 2. wholesome

 3. fitting

 4. kind

 5. sensitive

 6. purposeful

 7. gentle

 8. truthful

 9. loving

 10. thoughtful

 C. The passionate purity of **seasoned** conversation. V.6c

 In the ancient world, salt was used as a preservative for meat, helping to keep it from corruption and spoiling. The Christian’s speech, like their lifestyles (**Matthew 5:13**), must promote purity, rather than fostering spiritual, or relational corruptions.

 **Ephesians 4:29** Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

 **Ephesians 5:3-4** But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; **4** neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

 D. The passionate purity of **sincere** conversation. V.6d

 This is saying and doing the right thing at the right time.

 **1 Peter 3:15** But sanctify the Lord God1 in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

 **James 3:2** For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

 **Psalm 12:4** Who have said, "With our tongue we will prevail; Our lips *are* our own; Who *is* lord over us?"

 **Psalm 141:3** Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips.