

How does a Christian advance the cause of Jesus Christ and elevate the testimony of the church? Our answers reveal that what we are dictates what we do. The way we allow God to transform our being influences all our doing.

*Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.* Colossians 4:5:6

## 1. Act Wisely

*Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders*

v. 5

Our witness for Jesus Christ requires us to “walk our talk.” If we are truly *born again* (John 3:3), our conduct should reflect our faith commitment. Paul challenges us to *put off the old man* (person) so we can *put on the new* (Colossians 3:5-10). To make these changes, we want to develop the skills for living in the way of Jesus. The Bible introduces us to truth. The Holy Spirit reveals the way truth engages us. We are to apply what we have digested as we encounter life’s circumstances.

Often, life races by at such a pace we need reminders to link the various aspects of life with our thoughts, words and deeds. Christians around the world take about a tenth of the year (the 40 days of Lent) to consider the question, “What does it mean to me to be like Jesus?”

As you travel through the days before Easter, think through your answers to the following questions:

- What 25 words would express what is most important to you?
- What would you most like to undo in the way you are living?
- What changes would help you walk your talk?
- What would you do if you knew God were working through you?
- What could you give away each of the 40 days of Lent to remind you of what Jesus gave to change you?

Your answer to these questions reveals the you the world sees.

## 2. Be Alert

*Make the most of every opportunity*

v. 5

Some translations translate these words “redeeming the time.”

The market concept speaks of a “purchase” The theological concept speaks of “repurchasing.”

In his commentary, H.C.G. Moule translates this, *don't just sit there and wait for opportunity to fall into your lap, go after it.*

To make the most of our opportunities, talk to God, listen and share with others.

*Keep your eyes open...*

*1 Corinthians 16:13 The Message*

## 3. Communicate Value

*Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

v. 6

Jesus said, *out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.*

*Matthew 12:34*

How do your words affect others?

Who has your tongue?

*Grace seasoned with salt*—Grace flavors; salt preserves.

If only we could speak with grace as well as we speak with gossip...

Do our words build up or tear down...help or hurt...?

How much of what you say makes life better?

To act wisely we must pay attention to the way we are thinking, talking and acting. To be faithful in our commitment to Jesus Christ, we need to pay attention to the opportunities God gives us to listen, to see and to

speak. Then, we want to give of ourselves in making the Christ-Difference where we live and throughout our world. In all things, we want to communicate the very values God invested in us when we discovered the reality of God's love for each of us.

The New International Version, 1984 is the Bible translation used in this study unless otherwise noted.

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