1 – Praying For A Lost & Dying World
Colossians 4:2-6

2 - **Our Duty For a Lost & Dying World**

1. **Love the lost**. (Matthew 5:43ff)
2. **Seek the lost.** (Luke 15)
3. **Warn the lost.** (Ezekiel 33)
4. **Teach** the lost. (Ezra 7:10)
5. **Pray** for the lost. (Colossians 4:2-6)

3 - ***“Devote youselves to prayer…”*** (4:2)

* Includes the idea of **persisting and not growing weary of**. (Luke 11:5-13; 18:1-8)
* Why do we need “***persistence***” in our prayers to God? Why might we “***lose heart***”?
* ***“Pray without ceasing”*** (1 Thessalonians 5:17)
* **For what**? Opportunities to reach the lost. (Col. 4:3-6)
* What is our part in praying for opportunities? (John 4:35; 1 Peter 3:15; 2 Timothy 2:15; note vs. 3-4)

4 - ***“…Keeping alert …”*** (4:2)

* The need to **awake and watchful**.
	+ **For what**? **Opportunities**! (Matthew 26:40-41; Acts 20:31; 1 Corinthians 16:13, 1 Thess. 5:6-10;
	1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 3:2-3)
	+ Take heed to ourselves! (Acts 20:29)

5 - *“…****with an attitude of thanksgiving.”***(4:2)

* Who’s to be thankful and what are we to be thankful for?
* Our **salvation and forgiveness**!
(Colossians 1:12; 3:15)
* **Don’t forget!** (2 Peter 1:8-10)

6 - ***“Praying at the same time for us as well...”*** (4:3)

* Paul realized his own **personal obligation**. (Romans 1:14-16; obliged, eager, not ashamed)
* Paul often requested such prayers on his behalf. (Ephesians 6:19; 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2)

7 - *“****That God will open up to us a door for the word...”***(4:3)

* Paul’s focus was not on his own needs but for **opportunities for the word to be preached**.
* **Are we praying for open doors to reach the lost**? (1 Cor. 16:8-9; 2 Cor. 2:12-13; Acts 14:27)
* Will God open doors for the word today?

8 - *“****That God will open up to us a door for the word****...”* (4:3)

* Emphasis on “***the word***”. (Acts 12:24; 13:5, 7-8, 12; 20:32; Isaiah 55:10-11)
* **Must spread the word**. (1 Thess. 3:1; Acts 8:4)
* Is the word being “***neglected***”? (Acts 6:2)
* **Study diligently**, **handle accurately**, **teach purely** and persistently. (2 Timothy 2:15; 4:2-3)

9 - *“****That God will open up to us a door for the word****...”* (4:3)

We can and ought to pray for three things:

1. That **God would open doors** for us to serve Him and let our light shine. (Matthew 5:14-16)
2. That we would **recognize the open doors.** (John 4:35) What are we looking for?
3. That we would **ready to make the most of them**. (Ephesians 5:15-17)

10 - *“...****that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak****”* (4:4)

Paul’s prayer not just for **doors of opportunities** but **faithfulness, boldness and clarity** in presenting the mystery. (Acts 28:30-31; cf., 2 Timothy 2:9)

* **Example of Jesus**. (John 18:19-21; Matt. 26:55)
* As a “***steward of the mysteries of God***” (1 Corinthians 4:1; Ephesians 3:3-5; 5:17)

11 - *“****Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders****…”* (4:5)

In the context of ***“open doors”*** in preaching the gospel, Paul solicits the efforts of his brethren in their interaction with ***“outsiders”.***

Who are the ***“outsiders”***? (1 Corinthians 5:12-13; 1 Thessalonians 4:12; 1 Timothy 3:7)

12 - *“****Making the most of the opportunity (redeeming the time)*** *…”* (4:5)

***“Redeeming the time”*** - “to rescue from loss (improve opportunity)”. Ephesians 5:15-17, *“****making the most of your time…****”* (cf., Psalms 90:10-12)

One of our favorite excuses just isn’t true: “**I didn’t have time**.” W**e have time for anything we want**! (Luke 14:15ff

13 - *“****Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt****…”* (4:6)

How do we **speak with grace?**

In **manner** & **substance**.(Ephesians 4:29; Luke 4:22)

* In a gracious manner w/o the substance and truth of God’s word of grace leaves people **happy but lost**.

14 - *“…****so that you will know how you should respond to each person****.”* (4:6)

* **Different doors of opportunity call for different responses from the truth of God’s word**.
(Acts 13:10; cf., 2 Tim. 4:1-3; 1 Peter 2:14-15) Focus on ***“each person”* as we understand the value of every soul**. (Luke 15:1-10)
* **Reminded of God’s desire**. (2 Peter 3:9; 1 Tim. y 2:4)

15 - **Reaching the lost and dying world we live in**…

1. Begins with the need for **prayer** for ourselves and the need to be on the alert for opportunities. (vs. 2)
2. The need to seek for **open doors** to teach the lost. Remember, not all doors look alike (“each person”; vs. 6) and some may not look promising. (vs.3)
3. The need to make it clear and **speak boldly as we ought to speak**. Recognize the temptation not to so speak and God’s promise that we can. (vs. 4)

16 - **Reaching the lost and dying world we live in**…

1. The need to interact with **wisdom towards those outside** the body of Christ and never forget the judgment that awaits them. (vs. 5)
2. The need to **speak with grace** both in **manner** (graciously) as well as in **substance** (the word of His grace). (vs. 6)
3. The need to **redeem the time** and make the **most of our opportunities** - including the idea of opening doors not already opened. (Ephesians 5:15)
4. Remember **the value of each and every soul**.