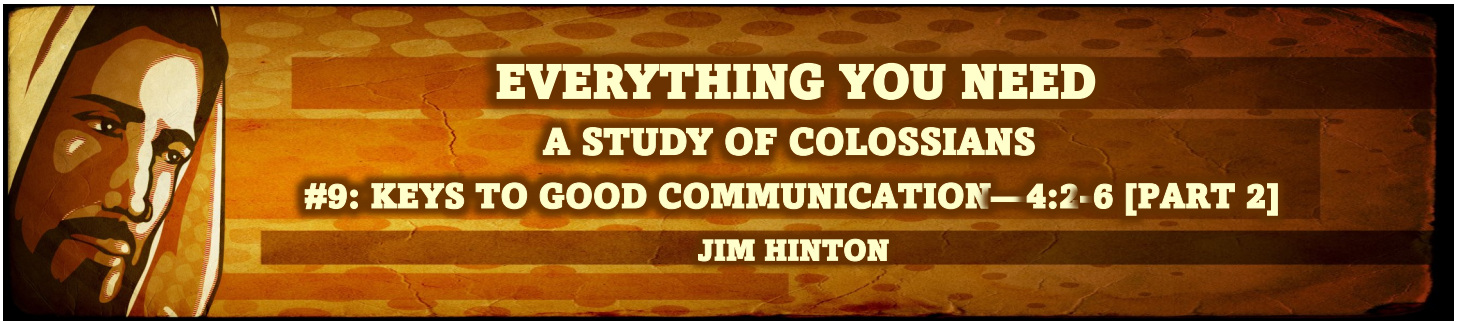




I. WAYS TO SURRENDER MY WAY TO VICTORY—COLOSSIANS 3:15—4:1

- 1. Let the peace of Christ rule my heart (v.15).**
- 2. Let the Word of Christ fill my life (v.16-17).**
- 3. Let the Spirit of Christ define my relationships (3:18-4:1).**

- **My relationships at home (v.18-21).**

God is not a God of disorder. He is a God of peace.

1 Corinthians 14:33 (NIRV)

- **My relationships in the workplace (v.22-4:1)**

A brief look at slavery in ancient times....

⇒ **Slavery was a fact of life in the ancient world**

⇒ **Slavery was often different than we understand it**

Forms of slavery addressed in this scripture:

- 1) Judicial slavery
- 2) Indentured servitude
- 3) Conquered peoples

Why didn't the New Testament overtly condemn slavery? The New Testament does subtly – but clearly – condemn slavery by promoting love and equality for all people

You were all baptized into Christ, and so you were all clothed with Christ. This means that you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. In Christ, there is no difference between Jew and Greek, slave and free person, male and female. You are all the same in Christ Jesus. You belong to Christ, so you are Abraham's descendants. You will inherit all of God's blessings because of the promise God made to Abraham.

Galatians 3:26-30 (NCV)

Any attempt by the church to forcibly overthrow the institution of slavery would have been crushed by the Roman Empire. This passage and most New Testament scriptures give practical counsel about how to best manage the reality of a situation as it existed – and for most people - could not be changed. However, Paul did specifically condemn slave traders

Were you a slave when you were called? That shouldn't bother you. However, if you have a chance to become free, take it.

1 Corinthians 7:21 (GOD'S WORD)

God paid a great price for you. So don't become slaves of anyone else.

1 Corinthians 7:23 (CEV)

The law is for people who are sexually immoral, or who practice homosexuality, or are slave traders, liars, promise breakers, or who do anything else that contradicts the wholesome teaching that comes from the glorious Good News entrusted to me by our blessed God.

1 Timothy 1:10 (NLT)

Eventually Christ did destroy slavery by transforming hearts.

There are some things which cannot happen quickly; there are some situations in which the leaven has to work and in which haste is the surest way to delay the desired end. The leaven of Christianity had to work in the world for many generations before the abolition of slavery became a practical possibility. The New Testament writers were concerned that Christian slaves should not demonstrate to the world that their Christianity did not make them disgruntled rebels but rather workmen who had found a new inspiration towards doing an honest day's work. It will still often happen that, when some situation cannot be changed, the Christian duty is to be Christian within that situation and to accept what cannot be changed until the leaven has worked.

William Barclay

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD COMMUNICATION

1. God is the greatest communicator

In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God.

John 1:1-3 (NLT)

The Word became a human being. He made his home with us. We have seen his glory. It is the glory of the one and only Son. He came from the Father. And he was full of grace and truth.

John 1:14 (NIRV)

2. So much of His Word is devoted to good communication

The right word spoken at the right time is as beautiful as gold apples in a silver bowl.

Proverbs 25:11 (NCV)

Pleasant words are like honey from a honeycomb—sweet to the spirit and healthy for the body.

Proverbs 16:24 (GOD'S WORD)

Words kill, words give life; they're either poison or fruit—you choose.

Proverbs 18:21 (TMSG)

III. PRACTICAL WAYS TO BE A BETTER COMMUNICATOR -- COLOSSIANS 4:2-6

1. Be praying (1a-2a)

If any of you needs wisdom to know what you should do, you should ask God, and he will give it to you. God is generous to everyone and doesn't find fault with them.

James 1:5 (TMSG)

Patience and gentle talk can convince a ruler and overcome any problem.

Proverbs 25:15 (CEV)

2. Be observant (v.2b-3)

Someone's thoughts may be as deep as the ocean, but if you are smart, you will discover them.

Proverbs 20:5 (CEV)

3. Be encouraging (v.1b,6)

Don't say anything that would hurt another person. Instead, speak only what is good so that you can give help wherever it is needed. That way, what you say will help those who hear you.

Ephesians 4:29 (GOD'S WORD)

Your words have put stumbling people on their feet, put fresh hope in people about to collapse.

Job 4:4 (TMSG)

4. Be ready (v.5-6)

But make sure in your hearts that Christ is Lord. Always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks you about the hope you have. Be ready to give the reason for it. But do it gently and with respect.

1 Peter 3:15 (NIRV)