

I Intro. (June 7, 2007)

Having concluded what a family under grace looks like, as opposed to what it might look like under Gnostic legalism, and after rehearsing the same with regard to master-slave relationships, Paul now shifts gears. His primary concern is prayer in connection with evangelism. He desires that the Colossians pray (Col. 4:2). He specifically desires that they pray for his evangelistic effort (4:3-4). He also desired that they be wise in their relationships with unbelievers (4:5-6).

II Prayer and Evangelism (Col. 4:2-6)

A. Be devoted to prayer (4:2).

1. (vs. 2) Here follows the twenty-second of the twenty-nine imperatives of this letter. Paul commanded, “Devote yourselves to prayer.” “Devote” translates the Greek, προσκαρτερεῖτε ([*proskartereite*] *present, active, imperative*, lemma, προσκαρτερέω), lit., “to be strong towards (*pros*, towards, used intensively, and *kartereō*, to be strong),”¹ then, “to continue to do something with intense effort, with the possible implication of despite difficulty.”² With the idea being to, “*busy oneself with, be busily engaged in*,”³ prayer in our context, the picture would be of a person who is “strong on prayer.”

“Prayer (προσευχῆ)” is the Greek word for prayer in general, and is a “petition addressed to deity,”⁴ meaning simply, “to speak to or to make requests of God.”⁵ It is the “most important practice to perpetuate in relation to God...That is so because in prayer we call on God to work, and we express our faith in Him.”⁶ It follows that the “Christian who does not pray is demonstrating independence from God (cf. John 15:5).”⁷ That implies self-sufficiency, which was really the Gnostic legalist’s view of things, and it reflects a failure to grasp the implications of grace with regard to the nature of our ongoing relationship with Christ. This involves recognizing the insufficiency of self and the complete sufficiency of Christ in thus, “holding fast to the head, from

whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God” (Col. 2:19).

Perhaps no activity on earth requires greater effort on our part than prayer. No wonder that Epaphras is noted for “always laboring earnestly for” for the Colossians “in his prayers” (Col. 4:12b). In such work of the heart and mind, it is easy to grow sluggish and become dull, deteriorating into a state of “listlessness,”⁸ which means, “Lacking energy or disinclined to exert effort; lethargic.”⁹ So Paul said that while praying, the Colossians should not let that happen, but rather they should be busy, “keeping alert in it with *an attitude of thanksgiving*.” “Keeping alert (γρηγοροῦντες *present, active, participle*, lemma, γρηγορέω)” translates a Greek word meaning literally, “to remain awake,”¹⁰ and then, “to be in constant readiness,”¹¹ and finally, “Of alertness in prayer...*be wide awake about it*.”¹² Though Lightfoot says that in Mt. 26:41, “the idea is not quite the same,”¹³ “This immediately reminds us of the Lord Jesus’ request to the disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane: ‘Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation.’ They were not vigilant, and so fell sound asleep. Not only are we to watch against sleep, but also against wandering thoughts, listlessness, and unreality.”¹⁴

We are further told that this alertness is to be accompanied, “with *an attitude of thanksgiving* (ἐν εὐχαριστίᾳ).” This is *one* specific thing that apparently helps maintain freshness in prayer. All prayer should be accompanied by thanksgiving, but in periods of long prayer in expressing our appreciation to God we are reminded of God’s bountiful blessings in the past, perhaps in response to previous prayer, and our hearts are encouraged to pray on in hope of additional affirmative answers to our requests. Lightfoot says on Phil. 4:6, “thankfulness for past blessings is a necessary condition of acceptance in preferring new

1Vine, W. E., *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell) 1981.

2Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989. 1:662.

3Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 881.

4Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 878.

5Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989. 1:408.

6Tom Constable. Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible. Galaxie Software, 2003; 2003. Col 4:2.
7Tom Constable. Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible. Galaxie Software, 2003; 2003. Col 4:2.

8Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 229.

9The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Electronic version licensed from InfoSoft International, Inc. All rights reserved.

10Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989. 1:259.

11Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 208.

12Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 208.

13Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 229.

14MacDonald, William and Arthur Farstad. Believer's Bible Commentary : Old and New Testaments. electronic ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995. Col 4:2.

petitions.”¹⁵ That makes thankfulness in prayer a happy requirement!

Elsewhere Paul mentioned being devoted to prayer in Rm. 12:12b. He said to “pray at all times in the Spirit,” in Eph. 6:18, and to “pray without ceasing” in 1Th. 5:17. Jesus said that, “at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart” (Lk. 18:1b). Paul himself set the standard for the Colossians, when he said that he was “praying always” (Col. 1:3b) them. Also we are told in Acts 1:14 that the approx. one hundred and twenty people gathered in the upper room awaiting the arrival of the Holy Spirit, “were continually devoting themselves to prayer.”

B. Paul specifically desires that they pray for his team’s evangelistic effort (4:3-4).

1. (vs. 3) While in the process of their being devoted to prayer, the Colossians were to be “praying at the same time (ἅμα ‘a point of time which is emphatically simultaneous with another point of time’¹⁶) for (περὶ)” or concerning Paul and his fellow servants “as well.” These would have included at least Timothy (1:1) and Epaphras (4:12, 13). “Pray for us” “was a request Paul often made of his readers (Rom. 15:30; Eph. 6:19; 1 Thes. 5:25; 2 Thes. 3:1).”¹⁷

The *content* of the prayer he would have the Colossians pray follows: “that (ἵνα – ‘sub-final use’¹⁸) God may open up (ἀνοίξει) to us a door for the word (θύραν τοῦ λόγου ‘Objective genitive, a door for preaching.’¹⁹.” The idea in opening a door is, “something made possible or feasible,”²⁰ and so, “to make possible some opportunity...(here to) ‘make it possible for us to preach the word.’”²¹ Paul, “uses this figure elsewhere, once of a great and open door with many adversaries in Ephesus (I Cor. 16:9), once of an open door that he could not enter in Troas (II Cor. 2:12).”²² Notice that God is the agent who can open such doors of opportunity to preach the “word.” Most think that the door was, “best

afforded by his release from prison.”²³ That might well be in the background. However, though Paul had suffered, “hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal,” yet “the word of God” was “not imprisoned” (2Tm. 2:9), nor could it be. So he himself was most concerned with opportunities to preach the word, whether inside or outside the prison walls. He was more absorbed with “getting the gospel out than,”²⁴ with getting himself out of prison. Thus his similar prayer could still be answered here even if he remained imprisoned: “brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified, just as *it did* also with you” (2Th. 3:1b).

Now Paul more fully explained what “the word” is in the form of a purpose clause: “so that we may speak forth (λαλῆσαι) the mystery (μυστήριον) of Christ (Χριστοῦ ‘genitive of apposition, the mystery which is Christ’²⁵),” “one that puts out of comparison the foolish ‘mysteries’ of the Gnostics.”²⁶ Remember that a mystery is something otherwise not knowable to man apart from divine revelation. This mystery was revealed to the apostle Paul (Eph. 3:3), “the mystery which for ages” had “been hidden in God” (3:9). The gospel as such, in and of itself, was not so hidden in God, but was revealed to Abraham in Gen. 12:1-3 (cf. Gal. 3:8). So the mystery is, “that **the Gentiles** are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (Eph. 3:6 – bold added), that is, that now both Jews and Gentiles are admitted to the one church, the body of Christ on the basis of faith alone in Christ alone. Constable’s perspective is as follows: “‘The mystery of Christ’ (v. 3; 1:26–27) is the gospel, especially that Jews and Gentiles have equal opportunity for salvation.”²⁷ As we saw that Paul put it in Col. 1:25b-27, “the word of God, *that is*, the mystery which has been hidden from the *past* ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this

15Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Philippians. Ed. Joseph Barber Lightfoot, bp. of Durham. London: Macmillan and co., limited, 1913. 161.

16Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989. 1:633.

17Walvoord, John F., and Zuck, Roy B., *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Scripture Press Publications, Inc.) 1983, 1985.

18Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

19Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

20Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 462.

21Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989. 1:668.

22Robertson, A.T. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 1997. Col 4:3.

23Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, A. R. Fausset, David Brown and David Brown. A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. Col 4:3.

24Tom Constable. Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible. Galaxie Software, 2003; 2003. Col 4:3.

25Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

26Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

27Tom Constable. Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible. Galaxie Software, 2003; 2003. Col 4:3.

mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

It was this particular message that got Paul in such trouble. It was the preaching of this very mystery, “for which,” he had, “also been imprisoned (δέδεμαι *perfect, passive, indicative, ‘to confine a pers...by various kinds of restraints, bind, tie’*²⁸),” that is, “on account of which he was in the state of having been placed in bonds (chains) in prison, cf. “ambassador in chains” (Eph. 6:20). As Lightfoot lucidly states it, “It was because he contended for Gentile liberty, and thus offended Jewish prejudices, that he found himself a prisoner. See Acts 21:28, 22:21, 22, 24:5, 6, 25:6, 8.”²⁹

2. (vs. 4) Lightfoot thinks this should be connected with the sub-final ἵνα [*hina*] clause above in vs. 3, “that God may open up to us a door for the word,” showing the purpose for God opening the door, but it is probably better to connect it with the participle, “praying,” giving the final purpose for the prayers of the Colossians.

Paul wanted to be able to fulfill the purpose of God to “make” the word of Christ in the form of the mystery “clear (φανερῶσω),” which literally meant, “to cause to become visible”³⁰ and then by extension here, “to cause something to be fully known by revealing clearly and in some detail.”³¹ In Eph. 6, this is connected with using God given, “opportunities boldly.”³² Here the emphasis is on clarity in presenting the message. We have in this mystery along with Paul and his team the most important message in the world. It stands to reason that when we present it, it ought to be with clarity. Pray for your pastor in this regard! Paul said that this was in accordance with what was required: “in the way I ought to speak,” literally, “as for me to speak is necessary (δεῖ).” There is no place for unclarity in preaching this message. “Wonderful as Paul’s preaching was to his hearers and seems to us, he was never

satisfied with it. What preacher can be?”³³ “There is no virtue in being ‘deep.’ We should aim to reach the masses of humanity and, in order to do so, the message must be presented simply and clearly.”³⁴

C. Paul desired that the Colossians be wise in their relationships with unbelievers (4:5-6).

1. (vs. 5) Praying as they would in behalf of Paul and his team, it was assumed that the Colossians would share in their compassion for the lost and desire to reach the unsaved in their own community. Are we like that? With his twenty-third imperative of the letter, Paul commanded his readers, “Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders,” literally, “in wisdom walk toward those outside.”

“Conduct (περιπατεῖτε *present, active, imperative*)” translates the Greek word for walk, here meaning, “to conduct one’s life, *comport oneself, behave, live as habit of conduct.*”³⁵ “Toward outsiders (πρὸς τοὺς ἕξω [*pros tous exō*]),” those not members, “of a particular in-group,”³⁶ i.e., the group of believers that made up the local church, “non-Christians gener.,”³⁷ whom believers have no business judging (1Cor. 5:12), and who do not have the knowledge of the mystery of the kingdom that believers have (Mk. 4:11), toward these, we believers, “those inside” (τοὺς ἔσω – 1Cor. 5:12) must behave, “with wisdom (Ἐν σοφίᾳ),” which is, “the capacity to understand and, as a result, to act”³⁸ with “prudence (and) discretion (the ‘ability or power to decide responsibly.’³⁹),”⁴⁰ and is, “good judgment in the face of the demands made by human and specif. by the Christian life.”⁴¹ Such a believer is thinking of his conduct toward unbelievers in terms of what effect it will have in

28Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 221.

29Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 229.

30Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989. 1:278.

31Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989. 1:337-338.

32Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 230.

33Robertson, Archibald Thomas, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, Tennessee, USA: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention) 1998, c1933.

34William MacDonald; edited with introductions by Arthur Farstad, *Believer’s Bible commentary: Old and New Testaments [computer file]*, electronic ed., Logos Library System, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1995 by William MacDonald.

35Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 803.

36Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989. 1:121.

37Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 354.

38Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989. 1:383.

39The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Electronic version licensed from InfoSoft International, Inc. All rights reserved.

40Swanson, James. Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains : Greek (New Testament). electronic ed. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. GGK5053.

41William Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature : A Translation and Adaption of the Fourth Revised and Augmented Edition of Walter Bauer’s Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch Zu Den Schrift En Des Neuen Testaments Und Der Ubrigen Urchristlichen Literatur (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996, c1979). 759.

eternity. This would mean in part for example that a candidate for elder, “must have a good reputation with those outside” (1Tm. 3:7a), and believers must work hard so that they, “may behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need” (1Th. 4:12). It will not be enough for us to say, “Well, I sure had a good time with those unbelievers, they really liked me, but of course, I never proclaimed the gospel to them. You see, I believe, ‘to each his own,’ ‘live and let live,’ ‘judge not that you be not judged.’ It’s none of my business what they believe.”

No, instead we must be busy, “making the most of the opportunity (τὸν καιρὸν ἐξαγοραζόμενοι),” literally, “redeeming the time”⁴² (NKJV) which is, “an idiom, literally ‘to buy out the time,’” which here means, “to take full advantage of any opportunity.”⁴³ The picture seems to be of a believer who lives in such a way as “to gain someth., esp. advantage or opportunity,” so that as a result he will have an occasion for proclaiming the message of grace to the outsider. We see the same picture in Eph. 5:16, “making the most of your time, because the days are evil.” Lightfoot says, “the prevailing evil of the times makes the opportunities for good more precious.”⁴⁴ Constable adds, “The Greek word translated ‘opportunity’ (*kairos*, lit. time) probably implies the opportune time, as it does in some other places.”⁴⁵ Confer Jn. 13:35; 1Pt. 2:11-15. There should be something attractive about our lives to the unsaved.

2. (vs. 6) Inevitably one of the key things that unbelievers observe about us is our, “speech (λόγος),” lit., our “word,” which is, “a communication whereby the mind finds expression...chiefly oral”⁴⁶ in nature. Paul may be assuming that our conduct has “earned” us the right to speak with the unsaved about the gospel here, more specifically, the “mystery of Christ” (vs 3b). It is vital how we speak at the moment, but our speech must, “always (πάντοτε) be with grace (χάριτι), seasoned (ἡρτυμένος), as it were, with

salt (ἄλατι).”⁴⁷ “Grace” here is, “a winning quality or attractiveness that invites a favorable reaction, *graciousness, attractiveness, charm, winsomeness...let your conversation always be winsome.*”⁴⁸ “Seasoned” was, “gener. ‘prepare’ w. connotation of skillful use of material. Of food preparation to add condiments to someth...Fig...*speech seasoned w. salt* to make it interesting and fruitful.”⁴⁹ “Salt” refers to, “speech that is winsome or witty...*let your speech be seasoned w. salt.*”⁵⁰ The believer’s, “conversation should be cheerful without levity, serious without gloom.”⁵¹ It should have, “the *savor* of fresh and lively spiritual wisdom and earnestness, excluding all ‘corrupt communication,’ and also tasteless *insipidity* (Mt 5:13; Mk 9:50; Eph 4:29)...Not far from Colosse, in Phrygia, there was a salt lake, which gives to the image here the more appropriateness.”⁵² “Plutarch uses salt of speech, the wit which flavours speech (cf. Attic salt)...Grace and salt (wit, sense) make an ideal combination.”⁵³ The picture here seems to be of a believer whose speech in testimony is attractive and “invites a favorable reaction,”⁵⁴ while mixing in some “winsome or witty”⁵⁵ remarks that help the unbeliever grasp what he is saying. Naturally such a believer will understand and apply 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*, that it may give grace to those who hear,” not to mention the fact that, “*there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks*” (5:4). At the same time, the emphasis does not seem to be on salt’s value as a preservative in Col. 4:6, but rather on its value as a flavorful condiment. Even so, the speech would be both, “attractive and wholesome.”⁵⁶

⁴⁷The New American Standard Bible, (La Habra, California: The Lockman Foundation) 1977.

⁴⁸Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 1079.

⁴⁹Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 137.

⁵⁰Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 41.

⁵¹Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, A. R. Fausset, David Brown and David Brown. A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. Col 4:6.

⁵²Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, A. R. Fausset, David Brown and David Brown. A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. Col 4:6.

⁵³Robertson, A.T. Word Pictures in the New Testament. Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 1997. Col 4:6.

⁵⁴Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 1079.

⁵⁵Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 41.

⁵⁶Tom Constable. Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible. Galaxie Software, 2003; 2003. Col 4:6.

⁴²The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁴³Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible societies, 1996. c1989. 1:624.

⁴⁴Lightfoot, Joseph Barber. Saint Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon. 8th ed. London and New York: Macmillan and co., 1886. 230.

⁴⁵Tom Constable. Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible. Galaxie Software, 2003; 2003. Col 4:5.

⁴⁶Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. 599.

Taking this approach in speech will result in the believer knowing “how” he “should respond (ἀποκρίνεσθαι)” or answer “to each person,” as opposed to “opportunity” or time in vs. 5. This implies a definite opportunity to answer the inquiry of a particular person (ἐνὶ ἑκάστῳ). The clause then is very similar to 1Pt. 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.”

III Conc.

All of us ought to be devoted to prayer. In our praying, a key matter will be the evangelistic efforts of men in ministry. That being a concern in prayer it ought to be a concern in our daily lives as believers, but in our general conduct, and then in our speech when a door of opportunity stands open before us.

Gnosticism is incapable of producing this life in Christ. It is all a matter of grace. Legalism produces stern, unyielding, rigidity which lacks any basis in truth.