

Time #5: Time and My Tongue

Colossians 4:2-6

Introduction:

- A. The effective use of time and our tongue are closely related.
- B. A traffic policeman hailed down a speeding automobile.
“You were going 90 in a fifty-five mile per hour zone,” said the policeman.
“So, what,” came the reply. “It’s a free country, isn’t it?”
“Let me see your driver’s license,” said the policeman.
“Never had one, I can drive just as well without it.”
“You also have last year’s plates on your car,” said the policeman. “That’s three charges against you.”
At this point the driver’s wife spoke up and said, “Never mind him, officer. He always talks this way when he’s drunk.” (*All American Joke Book*, Compiled by Bob Phillips, pp. 54, 55).
- C. Prayer and gratitude improve time use. Colossians 4:2
- D. Looking, waiting for God’s wisdom and open doors can ultimately save time and reduce injury caused by walking through walls before it is time to walk. Colossians 4:3,4
- E. How can I make the most of every opportunity with my tongue?
- I. WHAT I AM GOING TO SAY? – TAKE TIME TO THINK. Colossians 4:5,6
 - A. God encourages me to be slow in speaking. James 1:19
 - 1. A carpenter once said, “The rule I know for talking is the same one for carpentering: measure twice, saw once...”
 - B. Is it true? Colossians 4:5,6
 - 1. Is the information I am reporting accurate? Ephesians 4:25
 - a. Has B. T. quit the church?
 - b. Has J. R. “gone crossroads”?
 - 2. Will I make promises about time that I can’t keep?
 - a. Don’t Promise What You Can’t Deliver

“I’ll have your parts in two weeks.”
Four weeks later the parts arrive.

“I’ll put it in your hand the minute you walk in the door.”
But all you get when you walk in is a handshake.

“Dinner will be at 6:00.”
But as you dip your spoon in the soup, the clock strikes 7:45.

“The doctor will see you in five minutes.”
35 minutes later you’re greeted cheerfully: “And how are we today?”

Avoid a lot of grief and inconvenience for the people you deal with. Think before you announce how long something will take – and then deliver what you promised. On time. (A message as published in the *Wall Street Journal* by United Technologies Corporation, Hartford, Connecticut 06101, 1986.)

- b. Robert Townsend: If asked when you can deliver something, ask for time to think. Build in a margin of safety. Name a date. Then deliver it earlier than you promised. The world is divided into two classes of people: the few people who make good on their promises (even if they don't promise as much), and the many who don't. Get in Column A and stay there. You'll be very valuable wherever you are. (Further Up the Organization (Knopf), *Reader's Digest*, March 1990, P. 150.)

C. Is it time to say "No"? Mark 10:35,36

II. HOW AM I GOING TO SAY IT? – TAKE TIME TO THINK. Colossians 4:5,6

- A. I need to take time to work through and decide how to use my anger. Proverbs 15:1; Ephesians 4:26; Psalm 4:4
- B. I need time to acquire the wisdom about how to respond. Proverbs 26:4,5

III. IS IT TIME TO TALK TO THIS PERSON OR GROUP? – TAKE TIME TO THINK. Colossians 4:5,6

- A. Would it be a misuse of time to present this message to this person? Matthew 7:6
- B. Is it time to tell this information to these hearers?
 - 1. "If you can't say something nice, good, complimentary about someone, don't say anything."
 - 2. This is not always true.
 - 3. The important thing is not to say what a person has done wrong to the wrong person at the wrong time.
 - a. Brother who has sinned against you. Matthew 18:15-17
 - b. Elder – same principle. 1 Timothy 5:19,20
 - c. A divisive person. Titus 3:10,11

IV. IS IT TIME TO SPEAK THIS MESSAGE? – TAKE TIME TO THINK. Colossians 4:5,6)

- A. Have I taken the time to listen?
 - 1. Do I have reason to believe that I know what I am talking about? Proverbs 18:13
 - 2. Have I taken the time to listen to different viewpoints? Proverbs 18:17
- B. Is this thing appropriate to say at this time – would it be a blessing or a curse? Proverbs 27:14
- C. Is this person ready to hear? John 16:12

Conclusion:

- A. Is this the time to speak this message to those who are *outside*? Colossians 4:5,6
- B. Do I have the wisdom to say it? James 1:5
- C. Work for wisdom. Proverbs 2:1-5
- D. Do I have the life to back it up? 1 Peter 3:15,16