

11/5/26

Colossians 3:23-4:6
I never followed politics at all until Covid. But that changed when so much upheaval affected the country and the world. One thing I have come to understand is my need to trust the sovereignty of God. No matter who is in office, no matter what circumstances we face in our daily lives, no matter what trials we walk through with family or friends or jobs or whatever… our God is still in charge and in control.

We have this promise from His word in Isaiah 46:8-11, "Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all My purpose,' calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of My counsel from a far country. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it." Why is this important for me to hold onto in light of this week's theme, "Responsible Earthly Living"? Because if my God is still the same, still in charge and in control, then His call on my life to honor Him and do what pleases Him doesn't change with my circumstances. The call to love more and more remains. And the promise from God to be faithful and to work ALL things together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose is still true. He is my anchor in every high and every low.

With the security I have in the Lord and the understanding that this world is not my heaven, nor meant to be my heaven, what can I learn about living responsibly on this earth as a follower of Jesus Christ from Colossians 3:23-4:6?

Colossians 3:23-25 ~

Vs. 23-24 ~ "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ."

Living responsibly means living in obedience to the right authority. I'm not here to please man, but to please the Lord. The Berean Literal Bible, a word for word translation of the Greek,

says this with deep clarity... "That which you may do, work from the SOUL, as to the Lord and not to men." From my soul, I choose my loyalty. Let my loyalty be wholeheartedly devoted to the Lord. I have the promise from Him that my loyalty to Him is never wasted. The reward I receive from Him is far greater than anything I could ever do for Him. He will take me home to be with Him someday, and He will be with me every step of the way until that day.

What do I do for the Lord in comparison to Him? I simply follow Him faithfully, doing the work He's prepared for me to do, while He faithfully leads me, empowers me to do what He's leading me to do, and He comforts me and strengthens me along the way.

Vs. 25 ~ But does obedience to the Lord really matter? Ummmm… yes. "For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality."

Let me not be deceived into thinking that the Lord is here as my servant or magic genie. He's in charge. Who is the wrongdoer? The one who ignores God's call to walk with Him faithfully… the one who chooses the glory of man over the glory of God.

For what purpose does He "pay back" the wrongdoer? Not for condemnation, but for rescue. God's ultimate purpose for my life is to make me holy like He is. It is through holiness that I experience fullness of joy and the greatest peace. Hebrews 12 explains that He disciplines those He LOVES… so that we can share His holiness. When I'm disobedient to Him, He's on a rescue mission to remove me from the snare of the evil one as it says in 2 Timothy 2:26.

Colossians 4:1-6 ~

Vs. 1 ~ "Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven."

This is a continuation of the conversation that started in Colossians 3 about how we are to honor God by how we treat others in whatever role He's placed us. In the case of "masters" or employers, God wants them to treat their employees with the same gentleness and kindness the Lord our Master treats all of us as we're under His authority… doing what is right and fair. Colossians 3:25 says "there is no partiality with God," and He wants us to show no partiality to each other.

Vs. 2 ~ "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving."

Living responsibly for the Lord means being in constant conversation with Him. I'm not meant to carry out the call of God on my life in my own strength. God never said to any of His kids, "I told you I love you and I'll let you know if that ever changes." He is always loving us, and the best way for us to know that is to be seeking Him all the time. As I pray, be watchful… pay attention, stay awake… be ready to watch God work. Whatever He does, if I'm paying attention, I'll have reason to be grateful. I can trust that whatever He's going to do, He'll do it because He loves me. Even the things I don't understand will be done in love and for my good.

Vs. 3-4 ~ "At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak."

Paul asked for prayer for himself. He didn't want anything, not even prison to get in the way declaring the gospel clearly and boldly to anyone who would listen. Not even prison would stop Paul from speaking the gospel of Jesus Christ. He is my human, sinner saved by grace, example of what it means to walk in a way that pleases the Lord.

I want to pray that the Lord would let nothing hinder ME from speaking the gospel, and that not even prison would stop me. But I also realize… I'm weak. I get distracted by the smallest things. O Lord, I need You to change my heart and to grow my trust. Even as I see Your faithfulness in one moment, the next moment I wonder if You'll withhold my definition of good from me. Please help me to trust YOU even when my circumstances prevent me from getting what I think I want or even think I need. You know what's best. You have all the facts.

Vs. 5-6 ~ "Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person."

These verses show me that walking with the Lord and for Him widens my view. I don't just think about the tiny world around me, but I think about the gospel. I think about the people who don't know Jesus yet, and I seek to walk in wisdom so that they might see Jesus in me and turn to Him.

What does it mean to walk in wisdom. The book of Proverbs shows me that it starts with worshiping the Lord because all the treasures of wisdom are hidden in Jesus (Colossians 2:3). I also see what those treasures of Godly wisdom are in James 3:17-18… "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace." I can see why this would get the attention of "outsiders", those who don't know Jesus. This type of wisdom is foreign to them. It becomes a light to them.

And then when they see that my words are always gracious, even when they're not gracious toward me… seasoned with salt because salt brings flavor, preservation, and value to others… so that I may know how to answer each person, they might turn to Jesus and be saved. 1 Peter 3:15 gives me a picture of what these gracious words mean… "but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect." I need to always be prepared to give a reason for my hope in Jesus… the reason my words can be gracious… the reason I want to honor Him as holy.

So to live responsibly in this world, God calls me to work for His pleasure and not man's… to be in constant conversation with Him… to let the gospel always motivate my life… to wisely let my life point people to Jesus. Father, by Your Spirit, I pray that You'll accomplish this in me. I

praise You that You will! Please help me to cooperate with Your plan. Whatever path I walk, let me walk it with You.

Have a blessed day!
Jonna