

Sunday 25th October 2026

Colossians 4: Prayer & Mission – Michelle Shaw

Key Outcomes

- **Prayer and wisdom** are presented as interdependent practices: wisdom comes from God, and humbling oneself in prayer fosters godly wisdom, which in turn leads to more effective mission in all areas of life.
- **Intentionality and inclusivity** are the two primary practical applications for prayer: setting specific times and structures for personal prayer and regularly praying with others.
- **Living wisely** involves making the most of every opportunity by being welcoming, gracious, and encouraging, while using words to speak life and love.

Biblical Foundation

- **Colossians 4:2–6** serves as the core text, calling believers to devote themselves to prayer with an alert mind and thankful heart, and to live wisely among non-believers.
- **Epaphras** is highlighted as an example of someone who prays earnestly so that others may be fully confident, they are following the whole will of God.
- **Jesus** is the primary example of prayer, frequently withdrawing to mountainsides or spending time alone with the Father as the source of his life, mission, and purpose.

Understanding Prayer

- **Definition:** Prayer is a genuine two-way conversation with God—listening and talking to one who is rich in mercy, compassion, power, and love.
- **Aspects of prayer:**
 - Adoration and praise
 - Giving thanks
 - Petition (asking for oneself)
 - Intercession (asking for others)
 - Stillness and heart-to-heart focus
 - Listening
 - Confession
 - Exercising spiritual authority
- **Ways God speaks:** Primarily through the Bible, but also through other people, gifts of prophecy, and a "still small voice" within.

- **Purpose:** Prayer is part of the mission, inviting believers to partner with God in the redemption of the world and to experience divine power to be "salt and light" to others.

Practical Application: Intentional Personal Prayer

- **The challenge:** Good intentions often fail because of busyness; intentionality is required to actually execute prayer practices.
- **Example practice:** A "7-7-7" challenge—praying for 7 minutes at 7:00 (AM or PM) for 7 days.
- **Suggested structure for focused prayer:**
 - Create a list with a different topic for each day (e.g., salvation, healing, provision, calling, opportunity, mission).
 - Include praise and the recalling of personal testimony to stir faith and remember God's character.
 - Use an alarm and a timer to maintain focus.

Practical Application: Inclusive Prayer with Others

- **The "Little Flock" example:** A group meeting for 30 minutes every morning at 7:00 via WhatsApp or Zoom to pray together.
- **Structure of the group:**
 - Reading one chapter of the New Testament together each weekday (completing the New Testament in a year).
 - Praying directly from the scripture read, allowing different parts of the text to speak to different people.
 - Including praise, thanksgiving, requests, and discernment for concerns.
 - Sharing bread and wine to remember the Lord's death and resurrection.

Living Wisely

- **Kingdom perspective:** It is wise to remember that God's kingdom—described as precious, sacred, abundant, generous, loving, hopeful, peaceful, restorative, radiant, beautiful, glorious, majestic, and eternal—is intended to be experienced here and now.
- **Forgiveness:**
 - Confessing sin and asking for forgiveness is necessary to live in peace, free of guilt, fear, and shame.
 - Forgiving others is critical because unforgiveness can give the devil a "foothold" (a place or operational base) to work destructively.
 - Withholding forgiveness is linked to the tactics of the enemy; therefore, forgiveness is a wise protection.

- **Unity:** Jesus prayed that believers would be one, and the world will know Christians by the love they show for one another.
- **Faith:** Hebrews 11:6 is cited to emphasize that those who earnestly seek God in faith will find him and be rewarded.



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