**Make the Most of Every Opportunity**

**The Word**

Read together Colossians 4:2-6

**The Big Idea**

The grace of the gospel in our lives should lead to a graciousness with those who don’t yet know the gospel.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. On Sunday we discussed the “mystery of Christ” which is deeply related to the gospel message about Jesus. What about that gospel message hit you in a fresh or new way on Sunday?

2. In verses 3-4, rather than asking the Colossians to pray for his release, Paul asks for prayer for the gospel to be proclaimed. Consider Paul’s example of putting the gospel far ahead of his own comforts and conveniences. What does that stir in you as you consider your own life (be as specific as possible)?

3. Sunday’s message ended by talking about the Biblical themes of grace and truth (see John 1:14). Pastor Adrian called for a life with “outsiders” that begins with lots of grace that then may open a door for truth. Do you agree with this approach, or do you think sometimes starting with truth is more appropriate?

4. Consider the following statement made on Sunday: “When you understand and celebrate God’s grace in your life, you become a gracious person.” Candidly consider your posture toward others in this world, whether those close to you or those you don’t know personally. Where do you see a gracious and generous posture that reflects God’s grace and generosity to you, and where do you see a more judgmental or ungracious posture?

**Sermon Outline**

I. Consider the “mystery of the gospel” (v. 3)

 A. Paul uses this phrase 4 times in Colossians and 21 times in his letters

B. This “mystery” is the gospel of Jesus that was kept hidden for centuries and came as an utter surprise to those 1st century people

1. No one expected the messiah to be born in a stable of a virgin birth and to die on a cross for the sins of his people. Satan himself did not expect this.

 2. Consider the amazing realities of this mystery

 a. Jesus died on a cross as a penalty for our sin

 b. Jesus reconciled us to God (read 2 Cor 5:17-21)

 c. The righteousness of Jesus has been imputed to us (2 Cor 5)

 d. And it is all by God’s GRACE (read Ephesians 2:8-9)

3. When you celebrate grace, your worship becomes delightful, you become secure and happy, you know your destiny is in eternity with Christ.

II. Consider Paul’s call to prayer (v. 2-4)

A. Paul is in prison, and what’s amazing is he isn’t asking them to pray for his release from prison but is simply asking for an open door to proclaim the gospel.

B. There are 8 billion people in the world and roughly 2.5 billion Christians. Imagine if each Christian stepped into the world with a heart for unbelievers and a desire to reach one person for Christ.

C. When we live out the gospel we see our own personal pain in light of the deeper pain of the world and the fact that so many are headed towards a Christ-less eternity.

III. Consider Paul’s call to be a gracious witness (v. 5-6)

A. When you understand and celebrate God’s grace in your life, you become a gracious person.

 1. Parents become gracious parents

 2. Spouses become gracious spouses

 3. Churches become gracious churches

 4. We become gracious ambassadors for the gospel of Jesus

B. Consider how we engage the world

 1. Not soul hunters but people who love their neighbor as themselves

 2. Not sinner haters but people of deep compassion

3. Not those who only define themselves by the negatives but those who are also known for the positives (gracious men and women who love, serve, care)

4. We are called to grace and truth, and oftentimes living gracious lives opens the door for truth