**Colossians 4:2-6 The Opening Power of Prayer, Presence and Proclamation**

**Leader Notes**

**1. What phrase or sentence changed your life significantly? (“not guilty”; “cancer”; “I do!”; “You’re hired.” “I’m sorry Lord.”)** (The words that we pray have divine power to demolish strongholds, and open eyes, open doors, open mouths and open hearts. Prayer is the key that opens the door of heaven).

**Pray for open eyes! *4:2 “Devote yourselves to prayer being watchful and thankful.”***

The word watchful recalls the ancient watchmen whose job it was to sit on the city walls and scan the horizon for attacking armies or trading caravans. They saw sooner and further than anyone else. Prayer opens our spiritual eyes so we see sooner and furthe

**2. Watch for spiritual attacks. (attacking armies)**

**Read Matthew 26:36-41 and contrast the results of Jesus’ prayer and Peter’s sleep**

(Peter was sleeping when Jesus told him to pray, and only a few hours later he denied knowing Jesus. Jesus was praying when all his friends were sleeping, so when the enemy came, he was ready to do God’s will, not his own will. Watchful prayer is the difference). **In what area have you experienced the greatest spiritual attack in the last couple of weeks?**

**3. Watch for God sightings and spiritual opportunities. (trading caravans)**

**Read John 5:17,19-20. When we see God doing something, we should join Him in what He’s doing. What do you sense God is doing in your life, your family, your home group or your church? What season is it? How can we join God in what He is doing?**

**4. How does prayer change your Reticular Activating System?** (Prayer sanctifies your RAS so you notice what God wants you to notice. The more you pray, the more you notice. So pray for open eyes!)

**5. Read 2 Kings 6:17 and John 4:35. What are two things we often don’t see?** (God’s protection in our lives; the potential harvest of lost people around us.)

**Pray for open doors. *“And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.” Col. 4:3***

***6. How does Phil. 1:12,13 reveal how God answered Paul’s prayer request? (***Paul was a prisoner of war who helped his guards find freedom.)

**7. If God answered your prayer for open doors, what might it look like?** (A unique opportunity for evangelism)

**8. What people are most open to the gospel in our city?** (People in transition and people under tension. People are more receptive to the Gospel when they get married, welcome a new baby, move into a new home, a new school or get a new job. There’s all kinds of emotional pain that can open people to their need for God: divorce, loss of a loved one, unemployment, financial problems, family difficulties.) **How can we utilize that understanding as our small group reaches out?**

**Pray for open mouths. *Col. 4:4 “Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.”***

**9. An open door is useless if our message isn’t clear. The goal of evangelism is to make a mystery clear. Is there someone in our group who would be willing to present the essence of the gospel in 60 seconds or less?**

(There are many different approaches. Choose one and practice it with a partner.

**4 Spiritual Laws:** 1. God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life; 2. All of us sin and our sin separates us from God; 3. Jesus Christ is God's only provision for our sin. Through Him we can know and experience God's love and plan for our life; 4. We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives.

**The Roman Road** – 3:23; 6:23; 5:8; 10:9,10;

**Do vs. Done** - Religion is spelled ‘D-O,’ because it constantly requires followers to Do things to please God. But the Bible is pretty clear you can never Do enough to please God. The essence of Christianity is spelled ‘D-O-N-E.’ Jesus lived the perfect life, He willingly died on the cross to pay the penalty we owed, God raised Jesus from the dead and has given all authority to Him. Everything we need to ‘Do’ to have eternal life has already been ‘Done’ by Jesus. If we receive His forgiveness and follow His leadership, we become part of His family, and He begins to change us from the inside out.”

**Holiday Revue**

(Christmas = Jesus is God’s gift of love who shows us how to live;

Good Friday = Jesus, the sinless Son of God, died for our sin,

Easter = God raised Jesus from the dead so we can be in a right relationship with God

Ascension = Jesus is Lord of heaven and earth, so we live for Him and worship Him.

Pentecost = Jesus gives the Holy Spirit to all who repent and trust Jesus with their lives)

**Pray for open hearts.**

**10. Read John 6:44. Who is the only one who can change hearts?** Only God can open hearts, bring to the heart of mind of an unbeliever a knowledge of the truth and a desire to repent.

**11. From a human perspective, what else can open hearts or at least soften the soil?** (A life well lived. Presence precedes proclamation. Winsome believers open the way for dialogue about Jesus. Few people read books anymore, but they observe you)

**12. *4:5 “Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders.”* Who is one Christian whom you highly respect because of his wise lifestyle?**

**13. *4:5 “make the most of every opportunity.”* What are some upcoming opportunities that our group could take advantage of to share the gospel?** (Christmas service, Concert, new neighbours, potluck, etc.)

***14. 4:6 “Let your conversations be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”* Is there a correct formula to use when talking to people about Jesus? (**There’s no one correct formula to share the gospel with others. The essential ingredient is sensitivity to the person we are sharing with, and sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, who teaches us what to say and sometimes tells us to be quiet.

Prayer and work go hand in hand to open eyes, open doors, open mouths and open hearts.

**Speak to God about others.** Ask God for specific names. Write them down and pray for them specifically and persistently.

**Speak to others about God.** Ask the Lord to open doors and to show you what to say and what not to say. Listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit.