

Colossians 4:1-9

1. Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

This same principle also applies to employers and employees in providing payments and rewards for workers, staff, maids and drivers.

There are two positive guidelines:

Give what is right. In most countries, including Indonesia there is a minimum wage and to below this amount would not be right.

Give what is fair. What is fair? A fair allowance would of course be an amount above the minimum wage amount. Fairness is based on hard work, faithfulness, honesty, and commitment.

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

Three positive responsibilities for all believers:

Must have a prayer life and be in an attitude of prayer continually.

Must be watchful, careful, expecting the Lord to come at any time.

Must be thankful, remembering the words of God in

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18, *“Pray continually: give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.”*

3 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.

Apostle Paul is requesting prayers not for blessings or health or protection but for an open door (opportunities) to share the message of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. In chains – like a wicked criminal.

4 Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

Paul is also requesting prayer that he will share the Gospel clearly so that people can understand the message and also come to faith in the Lord Jesus.

5 Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.

This is good advise ... to be wise in your actions to others, to be a blessing to others, to help others, to give advise to others.

“Outsiders” which means those who have not yet believed in the Lord Jesus. Outside the faith, outside the fellowship of believers. Use every opportunity available to be kind others.

⁶ Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Here we have specific advise about our conversation:

Full of grace, speaking gracefully using good vocabulary.

Seasoned with salt – salt gives flavor to food so our conversation must be attractive, kind, tasty, make a good impression. Not rude and unkind. Also we must give wise answers to questions.

⁷ Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord.

Paul is in prison so he is sending Tychius to tell the people in Colosse how Paul is getting along. Who is Tychius? He brought this letter to the church in Colosse

A dear brother

A faithful minister

Fellow servant in the Lord.

⁸ I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts.

Tichicus is going to be an encouragement to the people not to have people feel sorry for Paul. No matter how tough we may have it, we can still be a blessing to others.

⁹ He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here.

Onesimus, one of the millions of slaves in the Roman empire, had stolen from his master, Philemon and had run away. Eventually he arrived in Rome where he met Paul who led him to faith in Christ. So Paul is sending Tichius together with Onesimus to report all the happenings with Paul while he is in prison. Onesimus was changed from being a thief to become a faithful and dear brother. Only Jesus Christ can change lives of people. He can change people’s character. See 2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”