

“So, How Will We Change?”

Slaying the Dragons of Deception #8

Colossians 4:2-6; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 5:13-16

Colossians 4:2-6 (NIV) **Devote** yourselves to **prayer**, being **watchful** and **thankful**.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.⁴ Pray that I may **proclaim it clearly**, as I should.⁵ **Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity**.⁶ Let your conversation be always full of **grace, seasoned with salt**, so that you may **know how to answer everyone**. John 3:5-6; Titus 2:11-12; 3:3-7

“Christianity seems like an old, broken-down building that I have to drive by every day. I don’t even notice it anymore.”

Eric, age 29

2 Corinthians 4:4 (NIV) The **god of this age** has **blinded the minds of unbelievers**, so that **they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ**, who is the **image of God**. Ephesians 6:10-12

How Are We Perceived? Are We Guilty?

Hypocritical? Sheltered? Too Focused on Getting ‘Converts?’ Antihomosexual? Too Political? Judgmental?

Ephesians 5:13-16 Everything exposed by the light becomes visible,¹⁴ for **it is light that makes everything visible**. This is why it is said: “Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”¹⁵ **Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise**,¹⁶ **making the most of every opportunity**, because the days are evil.

How Can We Change?

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1. Hypocritical? *“Christians are transparent about their flaws and do what they say. They act first, talk second.”*

2. Too Focused on Converting People? *“Christians patiently cultivate relationships and environments where others can be deeply transformed by God.”*

3. Sheltered? *“Christians are engaged, informed, invested, and offer intelligent and compassionate responses to the issues people face.”*

4. Anti-Homosexual? *“Christians show compassion and love to all people, regardless of their lifestyle. They offer practical help and support for those who seek change, but are not hostile toward those who do not.”*

5. Too Political? *“Christians respect people even when they disagree with them. They have a Biblical worldview, and work at finding solutions to complex issues.”*

6. Judgmental? *“Christians show grace by finding the good in others and seeing their potential to be followers of Christ. They are known for both honesty and kindness. They share their beliefs, but are not condemning. They are humble and caring with their words and their actions.”*

Colossians 4:5 (NIV) **Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.**

