We Are Being Watched
Colossians 4:5,6 (NKJV)

Do you ever get the feeling you are constantly being watched? That is more than just intuition, its the truth.

Did you know every time you go to Wal-Mart, there are surveillance cameras mounted on top of the building that film your every move from the time you pull into the parking lot until you walk into the store? And after you are inside there are surveillance cameras everywhere monitoring your every move.

Every time you go through the drive through at your local bank or fast food restaurant, you are being watched. Every time you do a transaction at an ATM you are being filmed. If you get pulled over for speeding by a State Trooper or a Sheriff’s deputy, there’s a good chance they filmed you on their dash cam, so don’t waste your breath trying to talk yourself out of a ticket. Many cities now have surveillance cameras mounted on street corners and if you run a red light the camera will take a picture of your car and license plate number, and in a few days you will receive a ticket in the mail.

How many of you are familiar with “Google Earth?” For those of you who don’t have a computer or internet access, let me explain.  Google Earth is a free computer software program any one can download on his or her computer or smart phone. Anyone who has “Google Earth” can type in your address and in a matter of a few seconds a satellite image of your home will appear on the screen. And with the “zoom” feature, they can actually zoom in close enough to see what kind of vehicle you drive, and whether or not you have a garden or backyard swimming pool.

I think all of us would agree it is discomforting to know that we as American citizens are under constant surveillance.
But there is another sense in which “we are being watched” that should be of special concern to all of us who are Christians. And that is what I would like for us to think about in this morning’s message.

Please turn with me in your Bibles to Colossians the fourth chapter. And let’s read verses 5, 6.

Colossians 4:5,6 (NKJV)

5  Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time.

6  Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

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In 2 Corinthians 5:20 the apostle Paul writes: “Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us.....”

What a high and noble an honor GOD has bestowed upon you and me to make us His royal ambassadors in this world.

If you and I live to be a hundred years old we will never attain any position or any title that is more honorable than to be AN AMBASSADOR FOR JESUS CHRIST.

As ambassadors for Christ you and I represent Christ everywhere we go. Whether we are at home......at work.....at school.....at the grocery store we represent Jesus Christ.

As ambassadors for Christ our influence, whether good or bad, has a greater affect on the lives of others than we will ever know.

*Your life may truly be the only Bible some people will ever read.

*Your life may be the only glimpse of Jesus some people will ever see.

*Your life may be the example by which some people judge all Christians.
But with this great privilege and honor of being an ambassador for Christ comes a tremendous responsibility; and that is the responsibility to live our lives and conduct ourselves in a way that brings glory and honor to the One Whom we represent.

We must be soberly aware that just as surely as our influence can help draw people to Jesus Christ, our influence can also drive people away from Jesus Christ.

The truth is, as ambassadors of Jesus Christ, “we are being watched” very, very closely. As Christians, our lives are under constant surveillance!

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First of all, we must never forget......

I. The Eyes of The WORLD Are Always Upon Us

Look again at the first part of verse 5 here in our text......

Colossians 4:5  Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside....... (The NIV says, “Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders.”)

(The New Living Translation says it this way: “Live wisely among those who are not believers.”)

1. Paul is warning us to be very, very careful about how we act and talk around worldly people.

2. In the eyes of the world, the fact that you and I are Christians means that our lives are held to a higher moral standard and come under greater scrutiny than the lives of anyone else.

3. Our lives are under “constant surveillance” by our non-Christian relatives......and our non-Christian co-workers......and our non-Christian neighbors......and our non-Christian classmates.....and our non-Christian friends.
4. And we must be constantly aware the eyes of the world will be drawn to that one weakness.....that one crack or flaw in our character that betrays Jesus Christ.

        Proverbs 25:26 (New Living Translation)  If the godly give in to the wicked, it's like polluting a fountain or muddying a spring.

5. Brothers and sisters, I don’t know of any other way to put this than to be straightforward.

    -Before you drink that beer in the presence of your non-Christian buddies or girl friends, you had better think twice.

    -Before you let that swear word slip out of your mouth, you had better think twice.

    -Before you put on that skimpy outfit to go out in public, you had better think twice.

    -Before you decide to run all over the community running down a fellow Church member or your preacher, you had better think twice.

    -Before you repeat that dirty joke, you had better think twice.

    -Before you start browsing those sexually explicit websites, you had better think twice.

6. More damage has been done to the cause of Christ by careless, reckless Christians than by all the atheists and agnostics combined.
In 1966, the *San Francisco Chronicle* published a shocking story that rocked the world. It was about a newly formed Church in San Francisco called *The Church of Satan* founded by a man by the name of Anton Szandor LaVey.

What was even more shocking than the fact that there was actually a Church devoted to the worship of Satan, was the reason Anton LaVey started this evil “church” as he called it.

When Anton LaVey was just 16 years old, he was an organ player in a carnival. He said, “On Saturday nights I would play the organ for the girly shows; and on Sunday mornings I would play the organ for the tent-show evangelists who held Church services on the carnival grounds.

LaVey said, “After awhile I begin to notice that the same men I saw sitting with their wives and children in those Church services, were the same men I had seen lusting after half-naked women on Saturday nights. After seeing these men portray a holy facade on Sunday mornings, I would see them right back at the “girly shows” the following Saturday night.

That hypocrisy completely turned me away from Christianity and I wanted nothing to do with the Church. *Anton LaVey was watching, and what he saw in the lives of men who professed to be Christians set him on a path to his eternal destruction.*

7. Brothers and sisters, the eyes of the world are upon us! They are constantly looking at our lives as “an excuse” to reject Christ. This is why we must “Be very, very wise in the way you act toward those who are outside of the kingdom of heaven.”

Secondly, we must never forget......
II. The Eyes of The **WEAK** Are Always Upon Us

Please turn with me in your Bibles to **Matthew chapter eighteen.** And let’s read, **verses 5-9.**

**Matthew 18:5-9 (NKJV)**

5 Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.

6 “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!

8 “If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire.

9 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.

1. Who is Jesus talking about when He refers to these **“little ones?”**

   - **Little ones** could refer to little children who are young and immature.

   - **Or, little ones** could refer to newborn or young Christians who are just starting to “walk” spiritually.
2. At one time, everyone of us were “little ones” both physically and spiritually.

Physically speaking, when we were little kids most of us probably looked up to certain adults as our role models, whether it was our parents, or a certain teacher, or the coach of our ball team.

The same thing was true in a spiritual sense. When we young Christians, we looked up to older, more seasoned Christians as our examples and role models, whether it was a godly parent, or a Sunday School teacher, or a leader in the Church, or a particular minister.

3. As the years went by and we matured in our faith, we have now become the spiritual role models for little children and young, immature Christians. They are watching our lives very, very closely. They are watching to see if our walk measures up to our talk. They are watching to see if we really are what we profess to be.

ILLUSTRATION

In his book, “You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church and Rethinking Faith” author David Kinnamon explores the reasons why so many young men and women between the ages of 18-30 are leaving the Christian faith. One of the biggest reasons is the superficiality they have experienced in the Church. In other words, what they hear Christians professing in the Church and how they actually live their lives don’t match up.
4. How many brokenhearted Christian parents are out there who tried to instill Christian values in their children, and had them in Sunday School and Church every Sunday, only to have all of their efforts completely undone by the careless, reckless behavior of some “professing” Christians.

5. Jesus said, “It would be better to have a millstone hung around our neck and be drowned in the sea than to cause a little one to stumble.”

We must never forget: THE EYES OF THE WORLD ARE ALWAYS UPON US.
We must never forget: THE EYES OF THE WEAK ARE ALWAYS UPON US.

And thirdly, we must never forget......

III. The Eyes of The LORD Are Always Upon Us

Psalm 33:13,14 (NKJV) The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men. From the place of His dwelling He looks on all the inhabitants of the earth.

Proverbs 5:21 (NKJV) For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, and He ponders all his paths.

1. The thought that GOD IS CONSTANTLY WATCHING US is both comforting and convicting.

   It is very comforting to know that GOD sees every trial we go through.....every tear we shed.....every pain we experience.....and every hurt we endure at the hands of another. It is comforting to know GOD IS WATCHING US when we sleep......when we are sick.....and when we are lonely.
2. But at the same time, it is very convicting to know that GOD sees everything we do behind closed doors.......everything we watch on TV.......every movie we watch......and every website we visit.

It is convicting to know that GOD sees us if we cheat on our taxes or cheat our employer by not giving an honest day's work for an honest day's pay.

It is convicting to know that GOD sees every lustful thought in our minds and every evil desire in our hearts.

3. How differently would we live our lives if we lived with the constantly awareness that GOD IS WATCHING US .....24 hours a day .....7 days a week........365 days a year?

4. You know, if you and I lived our lives with that constant awareness that GOD IS WATCHING it would act as a “safe guard” on how we live our lives when the world and the weak are watching us.

CONCLUSION

Several years ago, a preacher from out-of-state accepted a call to a church in Houston, Texas. Some weeks after he arrived, he had an occasion to ride the bus from his home to the downtown area.

When he sat down, he discovered that the driver had accidentally given him a quarter too much change. As he considered what to do, he thought to himself, 'You'd better give the quarter back. It would be wrong to keep it.'

Then he thought, 'Oh, forget it, it's only a quarter. Who would worry about this little amount? Anyway, the bus company gets too much fare; they will never miss it. Accept it as a 'gift from God' and keep quiet.'

When his stop came, he paused momentarily at the door, and then he handed the quarter to the driver and said, 'Here, you gave me too much change.'
The driver smiled and said, 'Aren't you the new preacher in town?'

'Yes' he replied.

'Well, I have been thinking a lot lately about going somewhere to worship. I just wanted to see what you would do if I gave you too much change. I'll see you at church on Sunday.'

When the preacher stepped off of the bus, he literally grabbed the nearest light pole, held on, and said, 'Dear God, I almost sold your Son for a quarter.'

Brothers and sisters, because you and I are “ambassadors for Christ,” we must never let down our guard, for WE ARE BEING WATCHED!