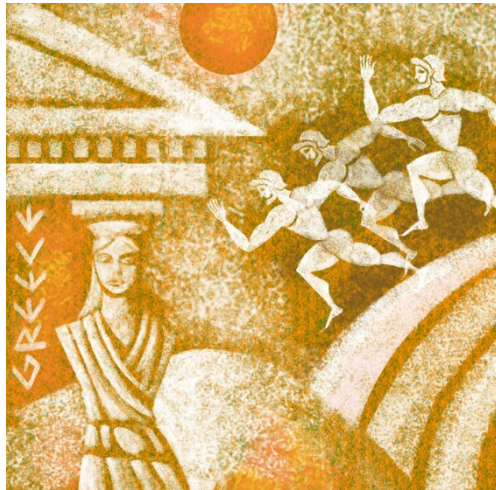


COLOSSIANS

Κολοσσαεύς



Calvary Bible Church Colossians 4:7-18 Study Guide

Wednesday Night Discussion Groups

Tim & Melinda Inman

April 27-May 11, 2011 – Two weeks only on this final section

The Inductive Method

Observation

What does the text say?

Overview

Establish Context by determining Historical Background

Where does it fit in the Bible timeline?

Ask: Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How?

Make simple lists of people, places, and events mentioned in the text

Make simple lists of key words that are used throughout large portions of the entire book

Determine Book and Chapter Themes

Mark questions to return to later for future study

↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓

Chapter Studies

Ask: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How?

Make more thorough lists of people, places and events

Make more thorough lists of Key Words in chapter or section

Ignore chapter divisions when the theme is carried forward

Mark Contrasts, Comparisons, Expressions of Time, Terms of Conclusion

Beginning of Interpretation: Tie this all together by examining text verse by verse

Outline or complete Structural Analysis to break down difficult text

Examine meanings of Key Words as you study verse by verse

Meditate on text to determine paragraph themes

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Interpretation

What does the text mean in correct context?

What principles do I see that tie to other sections of scripture?

Complete Cross References of those passages of scripture

Complete examination of Key Words: meaning, tense, voice

Notice and examine meaning of verbs & descriptive adjectives

Note commands and warnings

Consult commentaries after completing your own study

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Application

Based on correct interpretation of the text:

What must I do?

How can I apply this truth to my life?

How does this affect me?

How does this better knowledge of God change me?

Meditate on scripture and Memorize important, applicable passages of scripture

What do I see? What does it *mean*? How does this *change* me?

Digging in: Observing, Interpreting & Applying the Text

Read and study prayerfully each day. “Prayer is really a key to effective Bible study. Learn to pray before, during, and after your reading of the Scriptures. Prayer is especially crucial when you come to a place in your study where you are stuck and confused.”¹

The Text: Everyone studies in their own unique way; therefore, there are several studies options available to you regarding the text of Colossians 4:7-18.

- (1) If you prefer to work from one marked copy, earlier in the year you probably already removed the working copy at the end of the Overview material, placed it in a three-ring binder, and have used it for our entire study of Colossians.
- (2) If you didn’t like that option, the text has been printed throughout the material this year; so, you’ve probably been using the Study Guide alone. *Colossians* and *Philemon* are printed at the back to help you set this section within the context of these books.
- (3) Or, use your own bible and simply refer to this material for your study suggestions.

We will now focus in and observe Colossians 4:7-18 carefully and thoroughly.

The importance of careful, thorough Observation continues:

“The more time you spend in **observation**, the less time you will need to spend in interpretation, and the more accurate will be your results. The less time you spend in observation, the more time you will need to spend in interpretation, and the less accurate will be your results.”² To observe the text thoroughly ask **who, what, when, where, why, and how** of the text. Always look for the obvious. **In this section, people are obviously key. They are the subject Paul is writing about at the end of the letter. What about them?** Slow down to see what is actually there in the text, not what you *think* is there. Repeated, significant words and phrases, which are crucial to understanding the text, are always important. A key word or phrase is one that is vital to what the author is attempting to communicate.

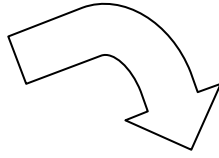
What words or phrases are significant in this particular section? In addition to the words that are significant in the entire book, there are key, significant words specific to each chapter or section. These essential words unlock the meaning of the text. **Paul’s descriptions and mentions of these people give us essential information to motivate and change how we live as Christians. Do we live our lives with the zeal for the gospel that these people showed?**

As always, use any study suggestions that help you; and, skip those that don’t. Turn the page and begin. The first week’s meditations are on pg. 4-8.

¹ Howard G. & William D. Hendricks, *Living by the Book*, (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 100.

² *Ibid.*, 43.

4/27-5/4: Instructions for pg. 4-8 on the bottom of pg. 5



Colossians 4:7-18 (NIV)

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

10My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.) **11**Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me. **12**Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. **13**I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis. **14**Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings. **15**Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

16After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.

17Tell Archippus: "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord."

18I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

Philemon (NIV)

1Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker, **2**to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church that meets in your home: **3**Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, **5**because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. **6**I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. **7**Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.

8Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, **9**yet I appeal to you on the basis of love. I then, as Paul—an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus—**10**I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains. **11**Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me. **12**I am sending him—who is my very heart—back to you. **13**I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel. **14**But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do will be spontaneous and not forced. **15**Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back for good— **16**no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord. **17**So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would

welcome me. **18**If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me. **19**I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me your very self. **20**I do wish, brother, that I may have some benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ. **21**Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask. **22**And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers. **23**Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. **24**And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers. **25**The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

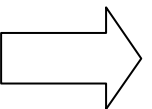
Week One: April 27-May 4—Read pg. 3, then...

Focus on this: What do I see? (We'll worry about what it *means* later.)

1. **Read Colossians 4:7-18 and *Philemon* on the facing page and above (pg. 4-5).** Read thoughtfully. Read contemplatively. Read like you've never read it before. What do you notice about these people? **Use the margins to write down observations and questions so you can investigate them later. Mark it up.**
2. Flip to the back of this Study Guide (pg. 23-26) and read the entire letter to the Colossians. **Circle the mentions of any of these people where they occur elsewhere in the letter.**
3. **Read through Colossians 4:7-18 thoughtfully one more time.** Determine what the key words and phrases are for this particular section. What words are used to describe these people? **With a pencil, on the facing page lightly circle the words you *think* are "key" to understanding this section and the details about these people.**
4. What themes are carried forward from earlier in the letter? **Make notes in the margin about ideas or actions that tie to what Paul wrote earlier in *Colossians* and in *Philemon*.**
5. **Notice things you want to study in greater detail later and make a note in the margin.**
6. (See the information on outlining, pg. 21, and make an outline if you'd like.)

Examine the text and think about the bulleted questions below. Some of these people were discussed earlier in *Colossians* and in *Philemon*. In the text, we'll mark & observe details about them, making notes in the margins. Others of these people are only briefly mentioned here. We'll do a bit of background research on some of these. **Make notes on the next page.**

- **How** is Tychicus described? **Why** was he sent? **What** do you know about Tychicus (**complete the questions and examination on the next page, pg. 6**)?
- **What are** Tychicus and Onesimus both to do, Col. 4:9?
- **What** did you previously learn about Onesimus? **Underline it in *Philemon* (pg. 4-5).**
- **Who** are the **Jewish believers with Paul**? **What** do you know about them (**complete pg. 6-7**)?
- **What** is Epaphras doing while he's with Paul? **What** do we already know about Epaphras and what he did? **Underline it in Col. 1:1-14 & 2:1-6 on pg. 23 & 24.** **What** does Paul say about him here in Col. 4:12-13? **Underline it.** Pause to meditate on what this tells you about Epaphras.
- **Who** are the **Gentile believers with Paul**? **What** do we know about them (**complete pg. 8**)?
- **Who** is to be greeted in Laodicea? **Who** is the host of this church? **What** does the fact that Paul named her, and her alone, suggest about her? **What** are the Laodiceans and the Colossians to do?
- **What** is Archippus to be told? **Why** do you think he needs this message? **Look at *Philemon*.**
- **How** does Paul sign his letter? **What** does he want them to remember?



Record your observations about the background of each of these people:

Tychicus:

Read Acts 20:4. Where was he from? _____. Ephesus is in Asia. Tychicus probably became a believer there and accompanied Paul from Ephesus to Corinth. As they traveled toward Corinth, Paul wrote 2 *Corinthians*. Might Tychicus have been one of other brothers mentioned along with Titus in 2 Cor. 8:16-22; 9:1-5? What does Acts 20:1-6 tell us about where Tychicus was headed with Paul as they left Corinth? According to 1 Cor. 16:1-9 and 2 Cor. 8-9, what were they carrying? What was their final destination (Acts 20:16)?

Before Paul wrote to the Colossians, he also wrote to the Ephesians. What does Eph. 6:21-22 say about Tychicus?

After Paul was released from prison, he was later imprisoned a second time. He then wrote to Timothy in Ephesus from prison. What does that letter say about Tychicus (2 Timothy 4:12)? What was the last task Tychicus completed for Paul before Paul was martyred?

What do we learn from Tychicus about faithful service?

JEWISH BELIEVERS:

Aristarchus:

Spending time with Paul got Aristarchus into a lot of trouble and resulted in a very inconvenient life. Where was he from? Acts 20:4_____ Record what you learn about Aristarchus from these references: Acts 19:23-41—

Was he released? _____
Acts 20:1-6—

After Paul was imprisoned in Jerusalem, what did Aristarchus do? Acts 27:1-2—

Notice what it says about him in *Philemon* & here.

What do we learn from Aristarchus about perseverance in trial?

Barnabas & Mark, cousins, or uncle and nephew:

Where was Mark (John Mark) from? Extended family history: Acts 4:36, 37 _____. Family house: Acts 12:12 _____.

When he was a young man, where did Mark go with Barnabas and Paul? What was he doing on this trip with them? Read Acts 13:1-12.

What mistake did John Mark make on this trip? Read Acts 13:13.

As a result, what happened when Paul and Barnabas prepared to leave on their second missionary trip? Read Acts 15:36-41.

After this, Mark traveled with Barnabas and then with Peter. We find from outside sources that in approximately 55 B.C.,³ while Mark was with Peter, he recorded Peter's account of Jesus' time on the earth, writing the *Gospel of Mark*. The next biblical reference of John Mark is in Colossians 4:10. **What had obviously happened in Paul and Mark's relationship in the interim?**

What did Peter later say about Mark? Silas (the man who took Mark's place with Paul on the second missionary journey) was Peter's scribe when he wrote this (1 Peter 5:12). **Read 1 Peter 5:13:**

Further evidence: In Paul's final letter, what did he say about Mark? Read 2 Timothy 4:11:

What does Mark's life teach us about failure, recovery, and perseverance in serving the Lord?

³ Ibid., timeline 1806-1807.

Jesus, who is called Justus, is only mentioned here in Colossians 4:11a.

GENTILE BELIEVERS:

Luke, author of *The Gospel of Luke* and *The Acts of the Apostles*: It is believed that during this first imprisonment of Paul's, Mark and Paul together assisted Luke as he recorded his chronicles, providing details as he completed his account for the "most excellent Theophilus"—both *Acts* and the *Gospel of Luke*.⁴ Luke's account is written in two parts. The gospel portion may have been completed in Caesarea, during the early portion of Paul's imprisonment as he awaited trial before traveling to Rome. Luke's descriptions of diseases in these accounts tell us that he was a well-educated physician. *Loukás* was his Greek name, used in Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:11; and Philemon 24. This is possibly an abbreviation of Lucanus or Lucilius, but not of Lucius (Acts 13:1; Rom. 16:21).⁵ The way we trace Luke's ministry is by noting when he changed from "they" to "we" and "us" in his account in the book of *Acts*. **Read Acts 16:8-17:1. When and where did Luke join Paul? When did he leave? Or did Paul leave him there?**

Read Acts 20:1-6. When and where did Luke join Paul?

Luke then stayed with Paul through the rest of the events recorded in *Acts* (Acts 21:17; 27:1; 28:16). It was during this time that *Acts* and the *Gospel of Luke* were written by Luke. During the events in Acts 28:30-31, *Ephesians*, *Philemon*, *Colossians*, and *Philippians* were written by Paul. Adversity in these men's lives was used by God to bless the church, even until today. **How is Luke described by Paul and Timothy in Col. 4:14? In what many ways would Luke have been a blessing to them?**

What was said about Luke by Paul, during his second imprisonment, at the very end of his life, as he awaited his execution in a dark dungeon? Read 2 Timothy 4:11. How would Luke's steadfastness and courage in this situation have encouraged Paul?

Because of Luke's unique gifts, how have we all been blessed? What does Luke's example tell us about making the best out of difficult circumstances and using the gifts God has given us for the advancement of the gospel?

What about Demas? The final word in Scripture on Demas is disheartening. We never know what happened next. There are two mentions of him in the New Testament: Colossians 4:14 and 2 Timothy 4:9-10. **What did Demas eventually do?**

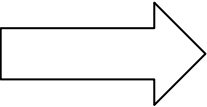
⁴ Lan T. Dennis, Executive Editor, Wayne Grudem, General Editor, *ESV Study Bible*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Bibles, 2007), 1806-1807.


⁵ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000) electronic edition.

Week Two: May 4-11, 2011

What do I see (observation)? What does it *mean* (interpretation)?

How does this *change* me (application)?


Day One: Mark Grammatical Phrases: This exercise will help you see how the main ideas of this section tie together. Note these with marks in the working copy or in the copy of Colossians on the next page (pg. 10). 

-  ➤ Do you see any **words of contrast** (*but, however, nevertheless, or, neither, nor, not only, etc.*) in this portion of the letter to the Colossians?
- Mark **words of comparison** (*like, likewise, also, in addition, as, in the same way, furthermore, just as, etc.*) with an = sign or arrow (or any mark you choose). What things are similar? What is the same? In the margin of your working copy, write what is being compared.

4:10a, *My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings*

AS DOES

Mark, the cousin of Barnabas

-  ➤ Draw a little clock face (or another mark you choose) above words showing **expressions of time** (*after, now, when, until, at that time, ages, generations, etc.*). **Why are these words or phrases important?**
- Mark with an “x” words that show **conclusions or an end result** (*therefore, so that, for the sake of, in order that, because, since, consequently, etc.*) and **draw arrows** to connect the linked ideas. **Ask yourself, “What is the “therefore” there for?” What is the author trying to show or prove? What is the conclusion or result that he is emphasizing? For example:**

*He is always wrestling in prayer for you **that** you may stand firm in all the will of God...*

- Mark **commands** in a way which draws the eye, such as highlighting, in order to ponder on these: they clarify the purpose of the letter. They are the forceful statements. There are six commands:
 - v. 10, “welcome him”
 - v. 15, “Give my greetings”
 - v. 16, “see that it is also read”
 - v. 17, “Tell Archippus,” and “See to it that you complete the work”
 - v. 18, “Remember my chains”
- The New Testament was written in Koine Greek. Due to Greek word formation and syntax, some things would be obvious in the original Greek that are not obvious in English.
 - In the Greek, these words express continuous, habitual action. Mark like this (~):
 - v. 12, “is always wrestling”
 - v. 17, “see to it,” “complete”
 - v. 18, “remember”
 - Words that express action that was completed in the past, but which has an ongoing or continual result. Mark like this (→):
 - v. 12, “fully assured”

THINK ABOUT IT: As you completed this exercise, what was revealed about the passage? On page 10, in the margin, write down anything you discover in the text that you hadn't seen before.

Colossians 4:7-18 (NIV)

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Day Two: What we'll be doing and why?

We will now complete some marking in the text that will help us pinpoint what we need to examine more closely after all the observations we've made so far. We want to mark the key words to help us see them more clearly and to see how each use of that particular word is connected to the other uses of that same word. Use **color** or **pencil** or **ink**, whichever you prefer. Mark each key word with a unique mark for that particular word (a different color for each key word, or a different way of circling it, or drawing a box around it, or any other creative mark you want to use for each particular word). The purpose of marking is to help us see what's there.

(1) If you are using the working copy you used to complete your Overview, you will see that some of these words are marked already—words that are significant for the entire letter. (2) If you're not using the working copy, use the text on the next page (pg. 12), or (3) complete this exercise in your own bible. Or do any combination of the three; it's entirely up to you.

On the next page, mark the words you now understand to be crucial—the words that are essential to understanding the text. Mark any of these words you see in the text with unique markings for each one:

- **Christ Jesus**
- **Author** (including pronouns [we, I], Paul and Timothy)
- **Recipients** (words that refer to the Colossians, including pronouns [you, your])
- **Other people** (all the people with Paul in prison, the people in Laodicea, Archippus)
- **Key/Significant Words observed and marked during the Overview**
- **Other Significant Words which are crucial for understanding Col. 4:7-18, especially descriptions of these people, what they're supposed to do, and commands to the Colossians.**

So what other words are significant and crucial? How do you tell?

1. First, reassess the words you circled the first week (look at your copy on pg. 4).
2. Then consider the questions you answered and meditated on from pg. 5-8 and the important ideas you saw as you marked the text on pg. 10.
3. What words will help you answer your questions and understand the key ideas in the text? What words, if you removed them from the text, would remove the meaning or intent of the passage? Were your initial assessments correct about which words were significant? If not, adjust. Mark additional key words.

After completing this exercise and marking the key words, carefully consider the text. Which of these words do you need to examine in your concordance?

On the next page, circle the words you need to look up.

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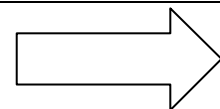
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NOW WHAT? Read the passage again. Then begin to make a list of all you want to investigate about each person. How are they described? What are they told to do? As you do this, question the text. This slows you down so you can observe the passage carefully. Do whatever works for you as you make your own observations. Add details as you look up word meanings. Do this on the next two pages.



Make observations. Add definitions from the concordance.

Paul (also, use of pronouns “me,” “I,” “my”):

Paul & Timothy (use of pronoun “our”):

Tychicus:

Onesimus:

The Jewish believers, 4:11b:

Aristarchus:

Mark, the cousin of Barnabas:

Jesus who is called Justus:

The Gentile believers:

Epaphras:

Luke:

Demas:

The Laodiceans:

The brothers:

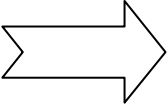
Nympha:

What are the Colossians to do about the Laodiceans and vice versa?

Colossian leader:

Archippus:

The plan for the rest of the week: Days 3-5

- 
1. Work through this week's study at your own pace. **Take as many days as you need on each part.** For instance, Part 1 may take you one or two days. It all depends on how you like to study and what helps you to comprehend and meditate on God's Word. This differs from person to person.
 2. Therefore, **first scan the four parts of the week's study plan (pg. 15-20) to help you plan the rest of the week's study.** Then, proceed according to your own schedule.

What does it *mean* (interpretation)? How does this *change* me (application)?
Part 1: Investigate the definitions of key words (may take one or more days)

HOW? Options to try: PRAY FIRST! Ask the Holy Spirit to help you comprehend.

- **Outline the passage** if this study method helps you (see pg. 21 for how-to instructions).
- **Read the passage in other translations.** Sometimes just reading the passage stated another way helps us to comprehend.
- **Look up word definitions** for the words in this passage that you *need* to understand, for instance “faithful minister,” “fellow servant,” “encourage,” “the kingdom of God,” “wrestling,” “stand firm,” “mature,” “fully assured,” “complete the work,” etc. **Examine any of the words that will help you comprehend the text.** How? **Page 22 details “how to use a concordance,”** or ask your group leader.
- A very thorough Greek lexicon is available at: <http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/>.
- Use your concordance to **find other places these same key words are used** (called finding the “cross references”) if you need additional help comprehending the meaning. **Look up the words that are assigned the same Greek reference numbers.** For instance, “mature” is Strong’s #5046 or GK (NIV) #5455. Look at other verses that include words that have that same numbered definition. Consult **page 22 for “how to find a cross reference,”** or ask your group leader.
- **Final option:** Examine the notes at the bottom of your study bible or in one of the listed commentaries (pg. 19), **after** you’ve completed the above steps. Try on your own first and experience the joy of discovery; then, find out if you were right in your assessment.

GETTING STARTED:

- 1. Read the text carefully,** calling to mind all your previous meditations on this section.
- 2. Which words have you determined you need to look up in the concordance? Investigate them today and tomorrow,** working through the text verse by verse. **On pg. 13-14 add notes about what you learn from the concordance definitions.**
- 3. As you comprehend each definition, paraphrase the verse—write it out in your own words to see if you truly comprehend.**

When you’ve finished investigating word definitions, complete the directions on the following page for summarizing what you’ve learned.

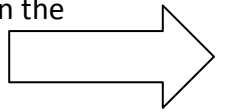
Part 2: Now integrate all this information and put it all back together

As always, use any study suggestions that help you; and, skip those that don't. Work through these steps of interpretation, but save *final* interpretation until you've finished studying the entire book and can contemplate the whole.

Identify themes within this section, then define the entire section:

You should now be able to construct a title or theme of each smaller paragraph that summarizes the content within this section. **Why do this?** Just like paraphrasing helped you to ponder on the text and to see if you really comprehended the verse clearly, so stating the theme allows you to pull together the basic ideas given at the end of the letter. This step aids your meditation on scripture by organizing in your mind what's here. **See if you can write a concise sentence that summarizes the theme of each paragraph.**

Determine the theme of each paragraph: In pencil, **work out your wording here** and then **transfer what you've determined** into: (1) the margin of your working copy, (2) the copy on the next page (pg. 17), or (3) your own bible.



What was the theme of Colossians 4:7-9?

What was the theme of Colossians 4:10-15?

What was the theme of Colossians 4:16?

What was the theme of Colossians 4:17?

What was the theme of Colossians 4:18?

What do you think is the theme of this entire section, Colossians 4:7-18?

[If you discovered that you like to outline, make these themes the paragraph headings within your outline. Take the time to do that now. Experiment with outlines to help you discover what aids you in understanding the meaning of the passage.]

Colossians 4:7-18 (NIV)

Theme of v. 7-9: _____

7Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a dear brother, a faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. 8I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts. 9He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here.

Theme of v. 10-15: _____

10My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.) 11Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me. 12Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. 13I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis. 14Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings. 15Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

Theme of v. 16: _____

16After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.

Theme of v. 17: _____

17Tell Archippus: "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord."

Theme of v. 18: _____

18I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

Theme of 4:7-18: _____

Recap the entire letter. What can you recall from memory?

What was the main theme of Colossians 1:1-14?

Who did Paul describe in Colossians 1:15-23?

What did Paul talk about in Colossians 1:24-2:5?

What was the theme of Colossians 2:6-23?

What did Paul say in Colossians 3:1-17? What commands are you seeking to apply?

What did he say in Colossians 3:18-4:6? What are you applying from this part?

How does this last section wrap it up, Colossians 4:7-18?

What did the letter to Philemon have to do with this letter?

Part 3: Next, check your conclusions

Final step of interpretation: Don't consult a commentary until you are at this point in your study. Use the commentary to verify your own findings and to double-check what you have discovered. If you consult commentaries before beginning they will influence your own study. Now is the time to check your conclusions. You'll gain from someone else's study by doing this; but, remember commentary notes aren't scripture. They aren't infallible.

Good commentaries to use (hard copies are all available in the church library):

- *The NIV Application Commentary: Colossians/Philemon*, by David E. Garland, Zondervan
- *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Colossians & Philemon*, by John MacArthur, Moody Press
- *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Abridged Edition*, Barker & Kohlenberger III, Zondervan.

Check the online sources to see what commentaries they have and what they say. Usually these are older commentaries because they're beyond copyright law regulation. For instance, you'll always find *The Matthew Henry Commentary*, a solid, highly respected, reformed commentary from the 1700s. It's always worth reading. Check out: blueletterbible.org, crosswalk.com, and/or biblegateway.com. Investigate their commentary section.

Part 4: Apply what you've learned. Let God's word change you.

Application: How does this work in my life? How can this change me?

Live it: Begin to implement the specific portions which the Holy Spirit has moved you to observe and notice as areas of growth necessary for your own life. As you studied, periodically we asked you questions to help you consider how the text might relate to you. Now, consider the questions below to contemplate even further application. What additional applications can you find from this letter?

Consider these personal questions:

1. In coming to the text, what did I find to be the most significant statements? Why?
2. How can these statements affect my life and change it?
3. What specifically does this section tell me about how God worked in the early church? What evidence do we see of the Great Commission and the carrying out of it?
4. How did each person's relationship with Christ change everything? List how the truths here change me. How do I live out the task of taking the gospel to everyone I know?
5. Is there an example here for me to follow? What positive motivations do I find in the passage that convince me to lead a righteous life and pinpoint for me how to do so?
6. Do any portions of Col. 4:7-18 produce a sense of conviction within me?
7. Do any parts of this section cause me to want to live differently? What solid steps am I going to take in that direction? What is my plan of action? What am I going to change in my life in

order to begin to implement the spiritual growth that I now realize is necessary? What needs to be adjusted? Do I recognize that if new things are coming in, old things have to go?

8. Is there a prayer to repeat for others? Review what Paul said to these people about prayer in Colossians 4:2-5. What evidence do we see of this in the final section, Col. 4:7-18? How did their love for each other and their prayers for one another bind these people together?
9. Is there a verse or verses to memorize?

Truth that Transforms: “Ultimately the mirror of God’s Word brings about a conversion, meaning that we actually begin to live differently as a result of our exposure to the truth. That transformation begins the moment we come to faith, which is why we refer to that milestone as a conversion. But, true conversion is not a one-time event; it’s a transformation that results in living differently as a result of exposure to God’s truth. It’s an ongoing process of becoming more and more like Christ.”⁶

Coming to the passage: What did you find significant as you came to this section of Colossians?

Conviction: Search for any potential sins in order to deal with them. Though we may feel a sense of reproof and correction from portions of Scripture, the desired response is repentance in order to change and move forward. Do any portions of this section or book promote a sense of conviction within you?

Convincing: What positive motivations do you find in the Scripture passage that convince you to lead a righteous life?

Conversion: Conversion is not a one-time event, but a transformation that results in living differently as a result of exposure to God’s truth. Do any portions of this section or book cause you to want to begin to live differently?

In moving forward, don’t make these mistakes:

1. Don’t substitute interpretation for application and do nothing.
2. Don’t substitute superficial obedience for substantive life-change.
3. Don’t substitute rationalization for repentance.
4. Don’t substitute an emotional experience for a volitional decision to change.
5. Don’t substitute communication for transformation and merely talk about what you’ve learned.⁷

⁶ Howard G. Hendricks and William D. Hendricks, *Living By the Book*, (Moody Press Publishers, Chicago, 2007), adapted from pg. 305 and from accompanying workbook.

⁷ Some of these application ideas are adapted from *Living By the Book*, Howard G. Hendricks and William D. Hendricks, Moody Press Publishers, Chicago, 2007, especially pg. 290-317.

How To Tools:

OPTIONAL: Make an Outline

Consider making an outline of the book at this point: Some people find that making an outline opens the text up for them. A simple outline could be made at this point if this is something you find beneficial. **Skip it if this doesn't help you.**

- **Complete a word-for-word outline of each section.** If you are the type of person who benefits from this type of structural work, prepare this initial outline skeleton by filling in the theme of the entire book with a theme for paragraph as Roman numerals under the theme of the entire book. Then you can add the text word-for-word under the Romans numerals, with each new paragraph being categorized by a letter of the alphabet.

- A. Tychicus will tell you all the news about me.
 - 1. He is a dear brother,
 - 2. a faithful minister,
 - 3. and fellow servant in the Lord.
- B. I am sending him to you for the express purpose that
 - 1. you may know about our circumstances
 - 2. and that he may encourage your hearts.
- C. He is coming with Onesimus,
 - 1. our faithful
 - 2. and dear brother
 - 3. who is one of you.
- D. They will tell you everything that is happening here.

- **Other people find that it helps them to break down the text, completing a structural analysis from the first day they begin to study a book or section of the Bible.** Experiment with outline forms or simply breaking down the text in a way that makes grammatical structure more obvious to see if this helps you comprehend more effectively.

Example: Col. 4:7-9 (NIV)

Tychicus will tell you all the news about me.
He is
a dear brother,
a faithful minister
and fellow-servant
in the Lord
I am sending him to you for the express purpose that
you may know about our circumstances
and that
he may encourage your hearts.
He is coming with Onesimus
our faithful
and dear brother,
who is one of you.
They will
tell you everything
that is happening here.

How to use a Concordance:

How to find definitions and cross references:

Complete Word Studies: The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew (some Aramaic). The New Testament was originally written in Koine Greek. Use an exhaustive concordance for a basic definition, or a lexicon or bible dictionary for expanded definitions.

How to use a Concordance:

1. Look up the word in the alphabetized front section of the concordance. (Remember: If you're using a Strong's concordance, you have to find how the word was translated into English in the KJV. "Stored up" in the NIV is translated "laid up" in the KJV, for instance).
2. Under the word, look for the verse reference where that specific word is used
3. Look for the number on the right. Each number corresponds to a Greek or Hebrew word.
4. Turn to the appropriate dictionary or lexicon in the back of the concordance (Hebrew for the Old Testament and Greek for the New Testament)
5. Look up the number for the definition
6. The words in italic are the definition. Write down the Greek word's transliteration (in English alphabet); and write the definition down next to your key, essential word.

How to Find a Cross References: Using the concordance, compare references in the Bible which use any word(s), or quoted passages of scripture, that you determined needed further study. To find these look in the concordance at the list of all the references given for the same word. Find the same Greek or Hebrew reference number that is given for the Greek or Hebrew word you are examining. (For instance, "fellow servant" is Strong's #4889 if you're using a Strong's Concordance or GK (NIV) #5281 if you're using an NIV Concordance.) Examine several other verses or all the verses that use the same number. Look up these other scripture references that use the same Greek or Hebrew word to compare the usage of the word. For instance, in *Colossians* and *Philemon*, who are described as "fellow servants" and "faithful ministers"? Who are called "faithful"? Who are the "fellow prisoners"? Who are the "fellow workers"? Who is the "fellow soldier"?

Also, you can check your concordance to see if we looked at all of the references to each person listed in this portion of the letter. Find their name in the front of the concordance; and check all the listed references. Did we find all the details about each one?

Try these online sources: www.blueletterbible.org, www.biblegateway.com, and www.crosswalk.com. Find which you like best; they all have online concordances. Example:

The steps to Blue Letter Bible's concordance are clean and simple. On the opening page, enter the passage you want to examine in the Bible/Dictionary Search. Pick the version (translation) and press "search." When the new page opens, click the button for what kind of help you want: C is for "Concordance and Hebrew-Greek Lexicon." Next, click on the concordance number by the word you want to investigate. This opens the concordance with the definition, or *biblical usage*, as well as the cross references. All the verses where this word is used are at the bottom of the concordance entry. Also, a very thorough Greek lexicon (dictionary) is available at: <http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/>. Just enter the word or the Strong's number you want to look up in the search box on the right hand of the page. A detailed definition will be given.

Colossians 1 (NIV)

1Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

2To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

3We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, **4**because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints— **5**the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel **6**that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. **7**You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, **8**and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

9For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. **10**And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, **11**being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully **12**giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. **13**For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, **14**in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

15He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. **16**For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. **17**He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. **18**And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. **19**For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, **20**and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

21Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. **22**But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— **23**if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

24Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church. **25**I have become its servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— **26**the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints. **27**To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

28We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. **29**To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.

Colossians 2 (NIV)

1I want you to know how much I am struggling for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. **2**My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, **3**in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. **4**I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. **5**For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is.

6So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, **7**rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

8See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

9For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, **10**and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. **11**In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, **12**having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

13When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, **14**having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. **15**And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

16Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. **17**These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. **18**Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. **19**He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

20Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: **21**"Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? **22**These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. **23**Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.

Colossians 3 (NIV)

1Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

5Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. 7You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. 8But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. 9Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. 11Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

12Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

15Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. 16Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. 17And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

18Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.

19Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

20Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

21Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

22Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. 23Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, 24since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. 25Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.

Colossians 4 (NIV)

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

2Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. 3And 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.

4Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. 5Be 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.

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

10My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.) **11**Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me. **12**Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured. **13**I vouch for him that he is working hard for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis. **14**Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings. **15**Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

16After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.

17Tell Archippus: "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord."

18I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

Philemon (NIV)

1Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker, **2**to Apphia our sister, to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church that meets in your home: **3**Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, **5**because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. **6**I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. **7**Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.

8Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, **9**yet I appeal to you on the basis of love. I then, as Paul—an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus—**10**I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains. **11**Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me. **12**I am sending him—who is my very heart—back to you. **13**I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel. **14**But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do will be spontaneous and not forced. **15**Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back for good—**16**no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a

man and as a brother in the Lord. **17**So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. **18**If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me. **19**I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me your very self. **20**I do wish, brother, that I may have some benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ. **21**Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask. **22**And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.

23Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. **24**And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers. **25**The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.