



Lesson 4

Colossians 1:1-12

Day 1

KEEP IT IN PERSPECTIVE

Remember that a paragraph is a complete thought conveyed by the original author to the group of people reading the manuscript. When a student of God's Word attempts to synthesize a paragraph, it is important to keep it very **basic**.

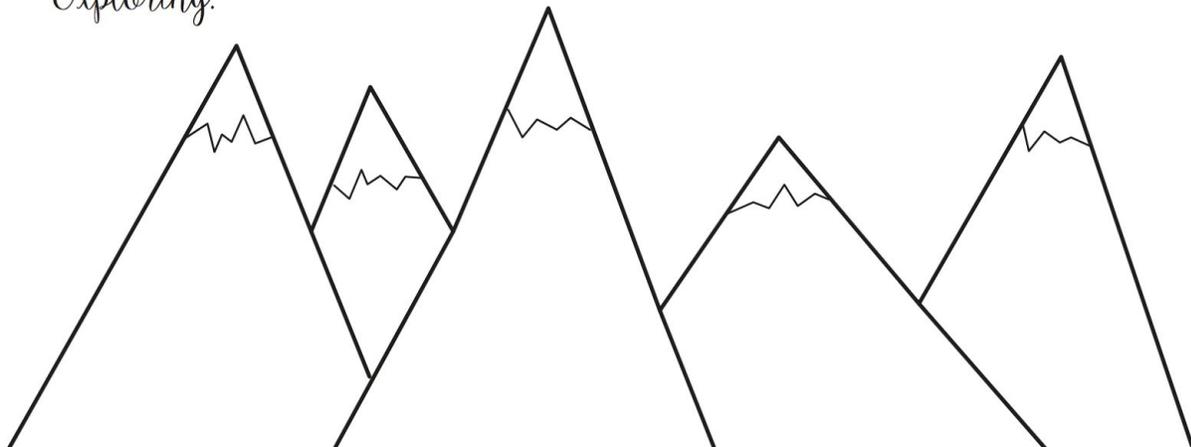
1. In the table, *summarize each paragraph in only one or two sentences*. Think about how you would explain it to a 10 year old child. I usually ask myself, "**Who is doing what** (and why is he doing it)?" This is usually enough to get the main point of the thought into one or two sentences. Verses 3-12 are done for you this week.

Chapter 1	Verses 1-2	Verses 3-12	Verses 13-23	Verses 24-29
Paragraph explanation	Paul greets the Colossians (Who? Paul) (Did what? Greets the Colossians)			

EXPLORING THE THEME

2. Find the Repeated Word: **PRAYER/PRAY/PRAYING** (any form of these words) throughout all four chapters of Colossians. Write down the verses where you find this word and what you learn about it.

Exploring:



Day 2 - Going Deeper

Since we have spent so much time on the author and recipients, we will not go into detail about Paul's greeting in v. 1-2, but begin with Paul's prayer of thanksgiving to God for a group of people whom he has likely never met! What an incredible example this is to us. Today, let's just look at **Colossians 1: 3-8**.

We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, 4 since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints; 5 because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel 6 which has come to you, just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since the day you heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth; 7 just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf, 8 and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.

3. **How often** is Paul praying for the Colossians according to **verse 3**? Is this characteristic of how often you pray for the saints?

4. **When** did Paul begin his prayer for them according to **verse 4**?

5. **How** does Paul describe the believers at Colossae at the **end of verse 4**? To what extent is their action shown? How would this be an encouragement to Paul? Would someone visiting Calvary Bible Church say the same thing about us? How about you individually? Is there someone in your life right now to whom you are not displaying this quality?

6. **Why** is Paul giving thanks to God according to **verse 5**? What reasons do you usually give thanks for others?

GROWING IN RESPECT TO SALVATION

7. What will you apply from what you have learned from Paul's prayer?

Day 3

Every winter at Calvary Bible Church we have a Mission's Conference. It is a BIG DEAL to bring many of our missionaries home to hear reports of the Lord's work in our "Jerusalem", our "Samaria" and to "all the world". Paul's prayer reminds me of my response when one of our missionaries tells us about some people that have come to know the Lord during their ministry. The attendees are so blessed and encouraged by the amazing work of grace Jesus worked in these "strangers' lives, and we are moved in our spirit to pray for them.

8. As we discovered in our Overview Lessons and as stated in verse 7, Epaphras was the one who brought the gospel (literally the "good news" (G 2098) from Ephesus to the cities surrounding the Lycus River in the province of Phrygia. There are two phrases, one in **verses 5 and the** other in verse **6** that describe the gospel. What are the phrases, and what idea is the same in both?

9. The gospel is also described by **two** actions that are *constantly* being performed in the life of believers. What are these two actions according to **Colossians 1:6**?

a. _____

What did Jesus say about this idea in Matthew 7:16-20 and Matthew 13:8?

b. _____

What did Jesus and Paul say about this in Matthew 13:31-32; 2 Corinthians 3:18 and Philippians 1:6?

10. Colossians 1:9 begins, "For this reason". Anytime you see the word "For", you need to ask yourself, "For what reason?" Look for the answer in verses 3-8.

11. What are the contents of Paul's prayer request for the Colossians in verse 9? How do the following verses help you understand what these ideas mean?

"that you may be (G4137)_____ with the (G1922)_____ of His will

In all spiritual (G4678)_____

And

(G4907)_____

- a. What does it mean to be filled? Think of an object that can be filled and write down what characteristics make it so.
- b. How do we know what the will of God is according to John 7:15-16 and Romans 12:2? How do these verses help us to understand God's will for these believers?
- c. What is the difference between wisdom and understanding according to Barnes' Commentary on Colossians? How might the Colossians have had trouble in this area?

This knowledge of God must be translated into our human situation. We pray for spiritual wisdom and understanding. Spiritual wisdom is sophia (Greek #4678), which we could describe as knowledge of first principles. Understanding is sunesis (Greek #4907), which is what the Greeks sometimes described as critical knowledge, meaning the ability to apply first principles to any given situation which may arise in life. So when Paul prays that his friends may have wisdom and understanding, he is praying that they may understand the great truths of Christianity and may be able to apply them to the tasks and decisions which meet them in everyday living. A man may quite easily be a master of theology and a failure in living; able to write and talk about the eternal truths and yet helpless to apply them to the things which meet him every day. The Christian must know what Christianity means, not in a vacuum but in the business of living.

GROWING IN RESPECT TO SALVATION

15. What believers can you pray this prayer for? Also, think about praying this prayer for a group of people you have never met. Here are two websites <http://www.persecutionblog.com> or https://www.calvarybiblechurch.org/site/dbpage.asp?page_id=180005759&sec_id=180007722

Moms: Pray this prayer while your children are listening. Impart to them a heart for Christians around the world.

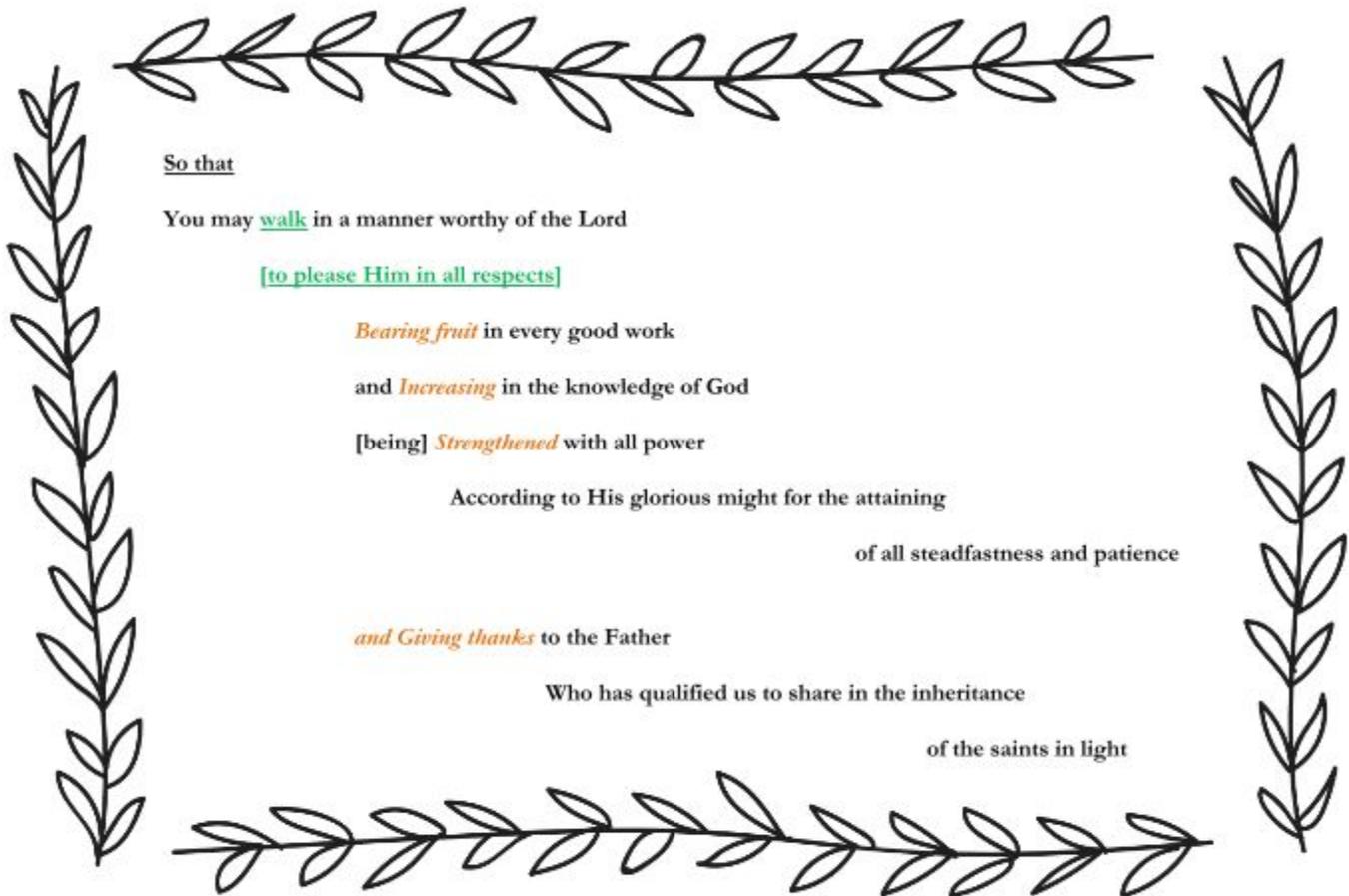
Day 4

As we take a closer look at **Colossians 1:10-12**, we see that this ONE THOUGHT gives the reason why Paul prays for the Colossians. We see that the first two words “so that” gives the reason why Paul has not ceased to pray for the Colossians.

SEEING THE STRUCTURE

16. Read these verses below to SEE the structure. Don't get scared by the diagram! We are just trying to get a clearer picture of the idea that Paul is developing. This really helps me, and I hope it assists you visual learners too.

Take notice of the **main action** of why Paul prays **in green** and the four ways how this action is characterized in **orange**.



A. Why did Paul continue to pray for the Colossians according to verse 10?

B. Look again at the four orange, italicized words. Which of these four actions in how you walk are **you to do**? Are there any which are **being done to you**?

17. How does a believer **bear fruit** according to verse 11? What are some examples of this according to Matthew 25:31-40? What does this look like in your life?

18. In what are believers to be **increasing**? How is that happening in your day to day routine? (Joshua 1:8; Proverbs 2:1-5; Acts 17:11; and 1 Timothy 4:13) What could you read in order to make progress in this area?

Day 5

19. Look at Colossians 1:10-12 again listed on Day 4. How are you being **strengthened**? For what purpose are you being strengthened? How are we being strengthened according to the following verses? (Colossians 1:11; Romans 8:11-17 and Ephesians 3:20)

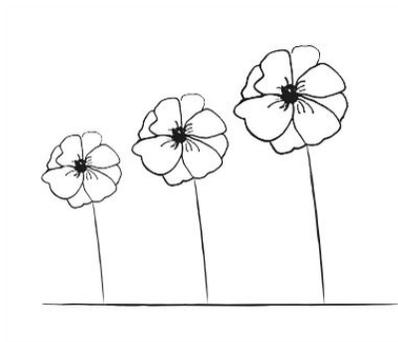
20. To whom are you to **give thanks** and what characterizes Him?

21. What does this inheritance entail according to the following verses?

- Romans 8:16-23
- John 14:2-3
- 2 Corinthians 5:1-5
- Revelation 21:-1-7

GROWING IN RESPECT TO SALVATION

22. Which of the four areas do you wish to grow in the most? What is your action plan for this to happen?



- **Bearing fruit** in good works

- Increasing in the knowledge of God
- Being strengthened with God's power in your life to make you stable and patient
- Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light