

A. Examining the texts.

1. Read Colossians 1:1-8. Who is Paul and what is he thankful for when he considers the Colossian believers? What do we learn about this church from this opening section of the letter?
2. Read Colossians 1:9-16. How often does Paul say he prays for the Colossians and what are the things he asks God for on their behalf? Why do you think Paul might pray these things for them?
3. Read Colossians 1:17-23. What does Paul say here about the identity of Christ? What picture does he give the Colossians of Christ and how would you describe the work of salvation that Paul paints here?

B. Meditation & application

4. What about the Colossian believers does Paul portray as admirable? Do you think that Paul could say that of you / of our church or your small group? How could you encourage believers to pursue these things in our local context?
5. How could we participate in ensuring that the gospel is bearing fruit and growing in our own contexts and spheres of influence?
6. What does verses 9-14 reveal about Pauls' priorities in prayer and how could we embrace his priorities in our own prayer life. Consider someone in your life right now who might be in need of knowing "the will of God," that they might "live a life worthy of the gospel," and commit to praying for them to this end for the next week or so.
7. The last part of this section 15-20 paints a vivid picture of the glory of Christ- consider two of these- for example- "head of the church," or "image of the invisible God," and think about its implications for your life. What does it mean that he is that- what difference does it make to how you might live?
8. Read Col 1:21-23. What has Christ done for you? Write out a prayer of gratitude and petition in light of the great salvation that Christ has won for you?

A Prayer: Heavenly Father- we praise you for the supremacy of Christ and his saving work. Make us grateful, thankful and whole hearted in our devotion to him- we pray, Amen.