

DAY 1 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

Who do you pattern your life after?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Timothy. We are writing to God’s holy people in the city of Colosse, who are faithful brothers and sisters in Christ. May God our Father give you grace and peace.

We always pray for you, and we give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for all of God’s people, which come from your confident hope of what God has reserved for you in heaven. You have had this expectation ever since you first heard the truth of the Good News.

This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God’s wonderful grace.

You learned about the Good News from Epaphras, our beloved co-worker. He is Christ’s faithful servant, and he is helping us on your behalf. He has told us about the love for others that the Holy Spirit has given you.

So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better.

We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and patience you need. May you be filled with joy, always thanking the Father. He has enabled you to share in the inheritance that belongs to his people, who live in the light. For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins. **Colossians 1:1-14 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

Who prays for you regularly? Who do you pray for regularly?

One of the greatest examples of prayer is Paul praying and then writing down his prayers and sending them in a letter to the believers he is praying for. Could you send a quick note with a prayer to a friend this week?

What has changed since God transferred you from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of Jesus? Or are you still waiting to give God permission to radically change you by giving you new life?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, thank you for the example Paul and Timothy gave of being totally joy-filled as they met their challenges and served others in your Name. Fill me with your Holy Spirit so that I can be significant for you and secure in you!

DAY 2 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

From a Christian perspective, art is a physical representation of a spiritual expression. What is created spiritually through the mind/heart/soul is translated into something physical like words, music, painting, architecture, and even organized work. What do you like to create and why?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see— such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together.

Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So he is first in everything. For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross.

This includes you who were once far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions. Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault.

But you must continue to believe this truth and stand firmly in it. Don't drift away from the assurance you received when you heard the Good News. The Good News has been preached all over the world, and I, Paul, have been appointed as God's servant to proclaim it. **Colossians 1:15-23 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

Dwell on the truths Paul is describing about Jesus...what surprises and amazes you? For more insight into who Jesus was and what he did before becoming a human, read John 1:1-14.

Based on this Scripture, if you have given your life to Jesus, how does God see you?

How does this Scripture challenge your beliefs about what God is like?

“Don't drift away from the assurance you received when you heard the Good News.” Why is this important?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, thank you for making me human—both spiritual and physical. I did not create myself, but I embrace what you have given me so that I can glorify you as my Father, the source and sustainer of my life, and enjoy you and the life you have given me as your child. I am so grateful that Jesus decided to take on a human body to give us an example of actual human potential. Thank you for giving me life and teaching me how to live through the Holy Spirit!

DAY 3 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

Do you realize that you have not yet reached your potential, and the best is yet to come?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for his body, the church. God has given me the responsibility of serving his church by proclaiming his entire message to you. This message was kept secret for centuries and generations past, but now it has been revealed to God’s people. For God wanted them to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: Christ lives in you. This gives you assurance of sharing his glory.

So we tell others about Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all the wisdom God has given us. We want to present them to God, perfect in their relationship to Christ. That’s why I work and struggle so hard, depending on Christ’s mighty power that works within me.

I want you to know how much I have agonized for you and for the church at Laodicea, and for many other believers who have never met me personally. I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God’s mysterious plan, which is Christ himself. In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

I am telling you this so no one will deceive you with well-crafted arguments. For though I am far away from you, my heart is with you. And I rejoice that you are living as you should and that your faith in Christ is strong. And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

Don’t let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority. **Colossians 1:24–2:10 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

Paul was so secure in Jesus’ love for him that he engaged serving at the highest level, not to earn favor but to fully utilize his gifts and power during the time he had left to help the most people know Jesus before he died. He was passionate to the point of suffering. How is God stirring you to give and sacrifice for others?

What is the “secret” Paul wrote about, and how is it changing your life?

How are you letting your “roots” grow into Jesus rather than empty philosophies?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, help me not be deceived by well-crafted arguments. Help me fully experience the power of Christ living IN me!

DAY 4 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

What is a Christian?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

When you came to Christ, you were “circumcised,” but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature. For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.

You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.

So don’t let anyone condemn you for what you eat or drink, or for not celebrating certain holy days or new moon ceremonies or Sabbaths. For these rules are only shadows of the reality yet to come. And Christ himself is that reality. Don’t let anyone condemn you by insisting on pious self-denial or the worship of angels, saying they have had visions about these things. Their sinful minds have made them proud, and they are not connected to Christ, the head of the body. For he holds the whole body together with its joints and ligaments, and it grows as God nourishes it.

You have died with Christ, and he has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world. So why do you keep on following the rules of the world, such as, “Don’t handle! Don’t taste! Don’t touch!”? Such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them. These rules may seem wise because they require strong devotion, pious self-denial, and severe bodily discipline. But they provide no help in conquering a person’s evil desires. **Colossians 2:11-23 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

Who does the essential work of “cutting away” your sinful nature, burying you with Christ, and raising you to walk in new life? When did you give God permission to do these things through humbly repenting and surrendering in baptism? Or if you haven’t yet, when will you and what exactly are you waiting for?

Why is the Christian life SO much more than a system of rules and religion?

How does someone with a reconciled relationship with God through Jesus approach obedience and rules?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, help me not to obey you out of a blind adherence to rules fueled by a fear of punishment from you or judgment from others. Help me live the new life you have given me with bold strides of faith and obedience to your heart and ways, not unhelpful human rules and regulations.

DAY 5 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

Who are you “walking with” as you experience both joys and struggles?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God’s right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory.

So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust, and evil desires. Don’t be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming. You used to do these things when your life was still part of this world. But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, and dirty language.

Don’t lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds. Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him. In this new life, it doesn’t matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us.

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.

Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

Colossians 3:1–17 NLT

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

Is there anything that belongs to your sinful nature that you need to strip away?

What does God fill you with once you let go of the unhealthy baggage?

Does God love you any more or any less based on your performance?

Why is it important to have BOTH a private and vibrant faith AND intentional growing relationships with other believers?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us. Thank you for choosing me to be a part of the holy people you love. Clothe me with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience as I make allowance for the faults of other people (and they make allowance for mine!).