


COLOSSIANS TRUTH



TRUTH



OUT



FAMILY DEVOTIONS

INSTRUCTIONS

For each week we will upload three devotions that build upon and link to our Kids Alive message on Sunday. Three devotions means:

- Those who already do devotions can continue these the other half of the week;
- Those for whom devotions are possible at most every second night of the week can also be included.

The devotions will follow this format:

INTRO

A short introductory activity or discussion

RECAP

A recap of the previous devotion

READ

A short passage will be printed. This makes it less time-consuming and also excludes the need to find a bible.

EXPLORE

Some simple comprehension questions that direct our understanding of the passage

APPLY

Something we can learn from the passage and apply to our own lives

PRAY

Suggested prayer points that come from the passage

MEMORY VERSE

This is only suggested if time permits as it may be a slightly longer activity. You may design something to remember the verse or do some fun games or activities to aid in remembering the verses.

WEEK 1: May 6-12

DAY 1

INTRO:

Brainstorm with your family: who do you know that goes to a different church to St Paul's? Who do you know that goes to a different type of church than St Paul's?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ COLOSSIANS 1:1-4

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, ² to God's holy people in Colossae, the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ: grace and peace to you from God our Father. ³ We 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 God's people.

EXPLORE:

According to this who did Paul know from a different church? (*God's people at Colossae*)

What did he do every time he prayed for them? (*Thanked God for them*)

Why did he thank God for these people? (*Because he had heard of their faith in Jesus and how they loved others*)

APPLY:

Paul sets us an example here that is worth following. If someone trusts the Lord Jesus and loves others then he thanks God for them! How often do you pray for those you know at other churches? How often do we thank God for people who attend different types of churches? Spend some time doing so now!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he has called many people to trust in his Son and to live a life of love. Pray that you will remember to pray for the local churches in our area and for those you know who attend other churches.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

The gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world. Colossians 1:6

Draw different types of fruit and write on each one or two words from this week's verse. Put these pieces of fruit into a basket and jumble them up for your family to arrange in the correct order. Keep these for the following devotion.

WEEK 1: May 6-12

DAY 2

INTRO:

Discuss with your family: what is the gospel? What does the gospel do?

RECAP:

Why did Paul thank God for the Colossians?

READ COLOSSIANS 1:3-7

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

EXPLORE:

What effect did the gospel have on the Colossians' hope? (*They heard about the hope of Christ in the gospel, and faith and love sprang from this hope*)

What was the gospel continuing to do in the Colossians' lives? (*Bearing fruit and growing*)

How did the Colossians hear the gospel? (*They heard it from Epaphras*)

APPLY:

Paul describes the gospel as centred on the hope we have in Christ and as something that helps us truly understand God's grace. He says the gospel is good news that needs to bear fruit in us: it needs to produce faith in God and love for others. How do you see the fruit of the gospel growing in your life and in the lives of those in your family?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that the good news about Jesus produces faith, hope and love. Pray that the gospel might grow these things in our lives as we continue to hear it and understand more about God's grace towards us.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

The gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world. Colossians 1:6

Hide the pieces of fruit from the previous devotion throughout your whole house. Add some extras to give the impression that the fruit has grown! Then work together to find them and bring them back so your family can reassemble the verse but also see how the fruit has multiplied.

WEEK 1: May 6-12

DAY 3

INTRO:

When you pray for others what do you generally pray?

RECAP:

What had the gospel produced in the lives of the Colossians?

READ COLOSSIANS 1:9-12

⁹Since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, ¹⁰so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹²and giving joyful thanks to the Father.

EXPLORE:

What did Paul pray for the Colossians? (*That God might fill them with the knowledge of his will*)

Why did he pray that this might happen? (*So that they might live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way*)

What did Paul say pleasing God looked like? (*They would continue to bear fruit, grow in their knowledge of him, be strengthened to patiently endure and give thanks to him*)

APPLY:

Just as the Colossians were bearing fruit Paul prayed that they would continue to do so. As his letter goes on we see that Paul knew they were in danger of turning away from the Lord Jesus and so he asked God to help them to patiently endure. This is a pretty great prayer to learn and pray for others!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father for Paul's love and care for some people he had never even met! Pray that we will faithfully pray for those we know to continue to know God's will and to live according to it so that they might please him in every way.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

The gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world. Colossians 1:6

Use this week's verse to start to pray for particular people you know who follow the Lord Jesus!

WEEK 2: May 13-19

DAY 1

INTRO:

As a family brainstorm as many names and titles for Jesus as you can (e.g. Lord, Saviour, Good Shepherd etc). See how many you come up with!

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ COLOSSIANS 1:15-17

¹⁵The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

EXPLORE:

In what two ways did Paul describe Jesus? (*Image of the invisible God, firstborn over creation*)

What was created in, through and for Jesus? (*Everything, even the powers, rulers and authorities*)

What else does Jesus do for all things? (*In him everything holds together*)

APPLY:

The Colossians were being tempted to move away from Jesus after receiving him as Lord. Paul wanted to remind them how important Jesus is to our faith; he made everything and we cannot continue to exist without him. Moving on from Jesus is really the silliest thing the Colossians could think of doing!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus made us all and sustains us each day. Then spend some time praising God that Jesus is all the things you thought of above!

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. Colossians 1:23

Write the words of this week's verse on paper cups. Stack them up randomly and get your family to reorganise the words into this week's verse. Keep the cups for the following devotion.

WEEK 2: May 13-19

DAY 2

INTRO:

Discuss: do you have any enemies? What do you think it would take for someone to become your enemy?

RECAP:

How did Paul describe Jesus in the previous devotion?

READ COLOSSIANS 1:18-22

¹⁸And [Jesus] 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.¹⁹For 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 behaviour. ²²But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body.

EXPLORE:

Who has Jesus reconciled to God the Father? (*All things on earth and heaven*)

Why did he have to do this? (*Because we were his enemies, alienated from God because of our evil behaviour*)

How did Jesus reconcile us to the Father? (*By making peace through shedding his blood*)

APPLY:

Although we don't often think of ourselves in this way we were once God's enemies! However Jesus has taken our sins away so that God is no longer angry at our sin. We can now have peace with him through Jesus. Paul needed the Colossians to remember this because they were tempted to turn away from Jesus. If this happened no forgiveness for their sins would remain and they would be back where they started as enemies of God!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that as in Jesus all the fullness of God dwells so that he can uniquely reconcile us to our Heavenly Father. Pray that we might know this peace with God and show it by changing our evil behaviour each day through the power of the Spirit.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. Colossians 1:23

Use the cups from the previous devotion. See who can stack them the fastest in the correct order and then say this week's verse. Keep the cups for the following devotion once again.

WEEK 2: May 13-19

DAY 3

INTRO:

How many times have the people in your family moved house? What are their best and worst memories of these times?

RECAP:

What did Jesus achieve for us by his death on the cross?

READ COLOSSIANS 1:21-23

²¹Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. ²²But 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— ²³if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move 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.

EXPLORE:

Why were we once alienated from God and his enemies? *(Because of our evil behaviour)*

What will happen now that we have been reconciled to God? *(We will be presented to him holy, without blemish and free from accusation)*

What would stop this from happening? *(If we don't continue in our faith but move on from the hope held out in the gospel)*

APPLY:

It seems from this passage that the Colossians were tempted to move on from Christ! Paul suggests that if they were to do this they would lose the hope we have that in Jesus we will become holy. Instead he urges them to continue in their faith, becoming established and firm in the things that they believe.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that in Jesus we will be presented to God as holy. Pray that we will continue in our faith and not move on from the hope of the gospel.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. Colossians 1:23

Use the cups from the previous devotion. Stack them up on to a shaky foundation and see who can build them in the correct order without knocking them down. When you manage to do so read out this week's verse.

WEEK 3: May 20-26

DAY 1

INTRO:

Have fun together as a family by coming up with a Job Description for each person's role in your family (e.g. Dad, Mum, kid).

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ COLOSSIANS 1:24-27

²⁴Now I rejoice in what I am suffering 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. ²⁵I have become the church's servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness— ²⁶the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the Lord's people. ²⁷To 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.

EXPLORE:

Why did Paul become the church's servant? (*God commissioned him to do the job*)

Why did God give him this commission? (*To present the word of God in its fullness*)

What is the mystery that Paul had fully disclosed? (*That Christ lives even in us Gentiles*)

APPLY:

Some of the sentences in this passage can be pretty confusing. Paul is trying to explain to the Colossians that, just like Jesus, Paul is also the Suffering Servant promised by Isaiah. Paul is completing the Job Description of this Servant by proclaiming the word of God to the Gentiles (something Jesus never did; Isa 49:5-7). More than that, he explains that the Spirit who anointed this promised Servant is now in the Colossians and thus they have the promised Christ living in them through his Spirit!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Paul has shown us all of God's plan which includes Jesus living in us by his Spirit. Pray that we will also be servants who are willing to suffer for God as we tell others about the hope of glory that we have.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Christ is the one we proclaim. Colossians 1:28

Draw a picture of Paul teaching people and add to it this week's verse.

WEEK 3: May 20-26

DAY 2

INTRO:

Share with your family: what is the most pain you have ever been in? Was it a broken bone, an intense fever or something else?

RECAP:

What did Paul try to explain to the Colossians?

READ COLOSSIANS 1:28-2:1

²⁸Christ is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. ²⁹To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me. ¹I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally.

EXPLORE:

What was Paul's goal in proclaiming the good news about Jesus? (*For people to become mature or complete in him*)

How did Paul go about this work? (*By using the energy that Jesus gave him*)

How did he feel about doing this for the Colossians, people he had never met? (*He described himself as labouring hard and struggling for them*)

APPLY:

The words that Paul uses here are surprising. Although he had never met the Colossians he says that he struggled and laboured for them. The word he uses is 'agony', a word we often associate with great pain. Paul took his job very seriously: he was 'at pain' to proclaim Christ clearly so that everyone might become complete in Jesus!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Paul dedicated himself to his work at such cost to himself. Pray that we too might be so committed to the good of others that we will struggle and labour for their benefit even when it pains us.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Christ is the one we proclaim. Colossians 1:28

Practise saying this week's verse at different volumes. Start with a quiet whisper and build to a loud proclamation!

WEEK 3: May 20-26

DAY 3

INTRO:

Imagine that you found a treasure map. What would you hope the treasure would be?

RECAP:

How hard did Paul work at proclaiming Christ to the Colossians?

READ COLOSSIANS 2:1-4

¹I want you to know how hard I am contending for you and for those at Laodicea, and for all who have not met me personally. ²My goal 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, ³in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. ⁴I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments.

EXPLORE:

Why did Paul work so hard for the Colossians? *(So that they might be encouraged in heart and united in love)*

Why did Paul want this? *(So that they might have the full riches of complete understanding to know Jesus)*

Why did he tell the Colossians this? *(So that no one might deceive them)*

APPLY:

When we think of treasure and riches we probably don't think of wisdom, knowledge and understanding! However the Colossians were in danger of moving away from Jesus because of 'fine-sounding arguments' that were deceiving them. Paul wanted them to be truly rich in understanding how central Jesus is to all that we believe.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he gives us wisdom, knowledge and understanding, treasures that we don't often properly appreciate. Pray that he will help us grow in understanding who Christ is and how important he is so that we will not be deceived by fine-sounding arguments.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Christ is the one we proclaim. Colossians 1:28

Put this week's verse into practise by talking to someone about Jesus before the week is over.

WEEK 4: May 27-June 2

DAY 1

INTRO:

Have someone in your family plant their feet firmly and then see if others can cause them to lose their balance. Then repeat as the same person stands on only one foot and see what happens!

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ COLOSSIANS 2:6-8

⁶So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, ⁷rooted 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 elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.

EXPLORE:

What did Paul challenge the Colossians to do? (*Continue to walk with Jesus as Lord*)

What would it look like if they did this? (*They would be rooted, built up and strengthened in him*)

What would this stop from happening? (*They would not be taken captive by people with hollow and deceptive ideas*)

APPLY:

Just as it is much harder to cause someone to shift when they are firmly settled so Paul wanted the Colossians to be firmly based on Jesus. That way they would no longer be tempted to return to their Jewish traditions or to follow other 'gods'. In the same way when we understand what it means to make Jesus Lord of every part of our life we will be less likely to follow other people's ideas or actions.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that serving Jesus as Lord provides a firm foundation for our lives. Pray that we will bring more and more of our lives under his care so that we will be less affected by what others do and say.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules? **Col 2:20**

As a family brainstorm some superstitious ideas that others follow ("Knock on wood"; "It's bad luck to walk under a ladder"). On the back of each of these write some of the words of this week's verse. Put the verse in the correct order as you discuss why being saved by Jesus means we don't have to worry about these things.

WEEK 4: May 27-June 2

DAY 2

INTRO:

Enjoy seeing who in your family can make different shadow puppets using their hands!

RECAP:

What did Paul want the Colossians to continue to do?

READ COLOSSIANS 2:13-17

¹³God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,¹⁴ having cancelled the charge which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵And 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. ¹⁷These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

EXPLORE:

What did Christ cancel? (*The charge which stood against us and condemned us*)

What did this do? (*Disarmed the powers and authorities*)

What should the Colossians do as a result? (*Not let anyone judge them with regard to their participation in religious practices*)

APPLY:

This is a difficult passage, not just because there are some big ideas here, but because Paul is speaking about God's law! God's law shows we are guilty of sin and so condemns us, because sin must be punished by death. However Paul argues that the law is Jesus' shadow; God's law doesn't just show us we're guilty but it shows us Jesus kept it for us! Paul therefore urged the Colossians not to return to keeping the law or worrying what people thought if they didn't keep its religious practices because Jesus had fulfilled it.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus has kept all of God's law for us and so we are no longer condemned as guilty. Pray that we might not worry about keeping the Old Testament laws but rather use them to thank Jesus that he has kept them for us.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules? **Col 2:20**

Repeat the previous devotion's activity but this time use some of the Old Testament rules to reassemble this week's verse.

WEEK 4: May 27-June 2

DAY 3

INTRO:

Talk to your family about rules you have in your household. Which ones do the children think are helpful? Which ones would they prefer not to have?

RECAP:

What did Paul say Jesus had done with God's law?

READ COLOSSIANS 2:20-23

²⁰Since you died with Christ to this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: ²¹"Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? ²²These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings. ²³Such things have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed religion, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining your desires.

EXPLORE:

What were the Colossians doing that Paul questioned? (*Keeping the rules of the world about what not to touch or eat*)

Where did Paul say these rules came from? (*They were man-made instructions*)

Why did Paul say these rules only appeared wise? (*They didn't actually address or solve the problem of our sinful desires*)

APPLY:

Part of the problem of sin is that it corrupts us on our inside. It affects our hearts so that we don't want to do good things or so that we actually want to do what's bad. Because Jesus set us free from sin he has also given us his Spirit who changes our hearts. As a result we are free from superstition, God's law, and from the rules of the world, AND our hearts are changed so that we can enjoy serving God!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he has set us free from trying to keep rules to please him. Pray that he will change our hearts so that we will enjoy serving him.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules? **Col 2:20**

Repeat the previous devotions' activities by writing some of your household rules and adding this week's verse on the back. Throw out these rules, not to show that you don't have to keep them, but that keeping rules isn't needed to make us right with God.

WEEK 5: June 3–9

DAY 1

INTRO:

Imagine you were given a new life tomorrow. What would be the first thing you would do?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ COLOSSIANS 3:1-5

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.

EXPLORE:

Why did Paul say to the Colossians that they had a new life? (*They had died and been raised with Jesus*)

What did he tell them they should think about and set their desires on? (*Things above; heavenly things*)

What should they do with earthly things? (*Put them to death*)

APPLY:

The great news of the gospel is not just that Jesus did things for us (lived the perfect life, died for our sins) but also that we did these things with him! Paul wanted the Colossians to know that their old way of living was over because they had died with Christ. As a result they needed to kill off the leftover bits remaining in their lives. They then needed to live their new life with Christ by changing their thinking & setting their heart's desires on Jesus.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that we have died and been raised with Christ. Pray that we too might therefore set our hearts and minds on things above and put to death our sinful desires.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature. Colossians 3:5

Play 'Hangman' to work out the words of this week's verse.

WEEK 5: June 3–9

DAY 2

INTRO:

Discuss as a family: if you had a clean-up around your house what would you get rid of?

RECAP:

What did Paul say we should do with whatever belongs to our earthly nature?

READ COLOSSIANS 3:8

⁸ Now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

EXPLORE:

What did Paul say the Colossians needed to get rid of? (*Anger, rage, malice, slander and filthy language*)

* What are malice and slander? (*Malice: being mean and hurtful; slander: saying bad things about someone*)

* How would the Colossians get rid of these things? (*Through the power of the Spirit*)

APPLY:

Paul didn't want the Colossians to get rid of anger totally; there are some things that happen in our world that should rightly make us angry. Rather the last phrase 'from your lips' relates to everything Paul listed: he wanted the Colossians to get rid of anger *from their lips*; rage *from their lips*; etc. Discuss as a family: if you had a clean-up of your language what would each of you need to get rid of?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that through his Spirit we can put to death whatever belongs to our earthly nature. Pray that we might rid ourselves of ungodly language, listing specifically what you think you most struggle with.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature. **Colossians 3:5**

Get each member of your family to write this week's verse on a slip of paper. On the back of it write what you feel you need to get rid of in order to clean up your language. Throw this in the bin after you have practised the verse to symbolise the effort you will make this week to get rid of such speech.

WEEK 5: June 3–9

DAY 3

INTRO:

Google different uniforms (from local schools, workplaces or emergency services) and see if your family members can locate who wears these items of clothing.

RECAP:

What sort of things did Paul say the Colossians needed to rid themselves of?

READ COLOSSIANS 3:9-11

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.

EXPLORE:

What did Paul say the Colossians should stop doing? (*Lying to one another*)

Why did he say they should stop this? (*Such a practice belonged to their old self which they had taken off*)

How did Paul say the Colossians were being made new? (*Through knowledge*)

APPLY:

Colossae was well-known for its textiles and clothing markets. Paul used this to suggest to the Colossians that the way they dressed needed to be consistent with the new person they had become in Christ; Christians shouldn't dress themselves in lies! What practices do you continue to 'wear' that are inconsistent with your renewal into our Creator's image?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he has made us a new person through the death and resurrection of his Son. Pray that we will dress ourselves in a way that shows we belong to and represent him.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature. **Colossians 3:5**

What are some things that you have put on this week that don't fit with your new identity? Write these down and then put into practice this week's verse; stab these things with a pen to show that you have confessed them and put them to death!

WEEK 6: June 10-16

DAY 1

INTRO:

Think of your favourite outfit to wear, and then go and get dressed in it for this devotion.

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ COLOSSIANS 3:12-13

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 one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

EXPLORE:

As God's chosen, holy and loved people what did Paul want the Colossians to clothe themselves with? (*Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience*)

* What are each of these things?

Who did Paul ultimately want the Colossians to look like? (*The Lord; he wrote 'forgive as the Lord forgave you'*)

APPLY:

In the previous devotion Paul said that we are being renewed in the image of our Creator. This means that each morning as we get dressed for the day ahead we need to put off our old self and put on our new as we clothe ourselves to look like Jesus. Which of the virtues that Paul listed do you need to practise wearing most in the week ahead?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that we have been chosen by him and so are holy and dearly loved. Pray that we might be compassionate, kind, humble, gentle and patient like Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

As God's chosen people, holy & dearly loved, clothe yourselves. Col 3:12

Attach the words of this week's verse onto different items in your clean washing pile or (less ideally) on the clothes in your children's wardrobe or cupboard. Have them dig through the pile to find the words and then assemble them into the correct order so that they can begin to learn this week's verse.

WEEK 6: June 10-16

DAY 2

INTRO:

What do you think are the greatest Christian virtues and why?

RECAP:

What did Paul want the Colossians to clothe themselves with?

READ COLOSSIANS 3:14-15

¹⁴Over 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.

EXPLORE:

What did Paul write bound together all the virtues from the previous devotion? (*Love*)

What other virtue did he want to rule in the hearts of the Colossians? (*Peace*)

Why did Paul say this should be the case? (*Because the Colossians were all members of one body and so were called to peace*)

APPLY:

It is no surprise that love topped Paul's list of the greatest Christian virtues; however peace may come as more of a surprise! Just as it seems ridiculous to picture one's body fighting against itself (your fist punching your leg!? Your leg kicking your own face?!) so Paul said it should be ridiculous to picture the body of Christ fighting amongst itself. Nonetheless today it is not uncommon to see church members not speaking to each other, or some churches in strong disagreement with others.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that Jesus has brought us peace with God. Pray that this peace might rule in our hearts so that we at St Paul's might be one and so that we might be able to work peaceably with other churches around us.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

As God's chosen people, holy & dearly loved, clothe yourselves. **Col 3:12**

Draw ten different articles of clothing (a shirt, a sock, a shoe etc). See if your family members can write on them this week's verse!

WEEK 6: June 10-16

DAY 3

INTRO:

How many times can each of your family members say 'thankfulness' in thirty seconds?

RECAP:

What two Christian virtues did Paul especially want the Colossians to practise?

READ COLOSSIANS 3:15-17

¹⁵And be thankful. ¹⁶Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. 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.

EXPLORE:

What final article of clothing did Paul say the Colossians should put on? (*Being thankful*)

How did he expect songs to fit in with this? (*As they taught and challenged one another by singing the message of Christ they would be filled with gratitude to God for what he'd done*)

When else did Paul say the Colossians should be thankful? (*At all times; they should give thanks whatever they were doing*)

APPLY:

Paul speaks of thankfulness three times in three verses. This is because thankfulness should characterise the Christian life. Do you think of yourself as a thankful person? Two ways to work on this are suggested here. It is probably no surprise that singing about what Christ has done increases our thankfulness, but the second is less obvious: thinking that everything we do or say we are doing for the Lord Jesus should lead us to give thanks. Paul will spend time explaining what this looks like in the different relationships we find ourselves in the next few devotions.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father for songs that fill us with gratitude for all that Christ has done (perhaps even sing one!). Pray that we might be thankful at all times in whatever we do.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

As God's chosen people, holy & dearly loved, clothe yourselves. Col 3:12

Write out all the things that Paul would have the Colossians clothe themselves with on separate pieces of paper. Attach these to your outfit for the day (or put them in your pocket or bag) to remind yourself to work on this week's verse!

WEEK 7: June 17-23

DAY 1

INTRO:

Discuss as a family: what are the most important relationships you have?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ COLOSSIANS 3:17-19

¹⁷ Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord.

¹⁸ Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. ¹⁹ Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

EXPLORE:

How did Paul say wives should relate to their husbands? *(By submitting to them)*

Why did he say they should do this? *(Because for those 'in the Lord' it is fitting to do so [it is the proper duty of Christians to submit])*

How did Paul say husbands should relate to their wives? *(By loving and not being harsh with them)*

APPLY:

In the next section of his letter Paul gave the Colossians examples of how his commandment 'whatever you do, do it in the name of the Lord' should look in important relationships. He wrote how married couples, parents and children and slaves and masters should relate. He wrote the same basic things to the Ephesian church (which was further up the Lycus Valley from the Colossian church) so that wherever God's people lived they might know how to practically live each day in a way that pleased the Lord.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he has taught us how to practically live in a way that pleases him. Pray that husbands and wives at our church might relate to each other in ways that please our Heavenly Father.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord. Col 3:17

Introduce this week's verse by deed: see if you can mime it!

WEEK 7: June 17-23

DAY 2

INTRO:

Get your children to imagine they can command their parents to do one thing. What will it be? Then do the same for your children; if you could command them to do one thing only what would it be?

RECAP:

What did Paul write it would look like for husbands and wives to relate in a Christian way?

READ COLOSSIANS 3:17, 20-21

¹⁷ Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord.

²⁰ Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. ²¹ Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.

EXPLORE:

What did Paul command children to do? (*Obey their parents in everything*)

Why did he say to do this? (*Because it pleases the Lord when they do*)

What did Paul command fathers to do? (*Not to make their children bitter*)

APPLY:

If we only had one commandment for our children Paul's commandment to obey parents in everything pretty much covers it! Paul's next commandment to fathers in particular stops us from treating children as our own personal slaves however. He warns that we should not make our children bitter or else they will become discouraged. Be honest: as parents or children how do you go with keeping this command? Adam and Eve were only given one rule, and they broke it... are we doing better?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that there is forgiveness and grace in Jesus. Pray that through the Holy Spirit we might keep these commands so that our family might be strengthened.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord. Col 3:17

The above passage reminds us that parents and children both have responsibilities that enable us to work together. In light of this get your children to say the first half of this verse, and then have both parents respond by finishing off the verse.

WEEK 7: June 17-23

DAY 3

INTRO:

So far Paul has addressed married couples and families. What do you think he would say about the way you should relate to your teacher and boss?

RECAP:

What commands did Paul give to children and their fathers?

READ COLOSSIANS 3:17, 27-4:1

¹⁷ Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord.

²² Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favour, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. ²³ Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, ²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. ²⁵ Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favouritism. ¹ Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

EXPLORE:

What did Paul command slaves to do? (*Obey their masters in everything*)

Why did he say they should do that? (*Not to gain their earthly master's favour but because they have a Master in heaven who will reward or punish them*)

How did Paul command masters to relate to their slaves? (*By serving them by giving them what is right and fair*)

APPLY:

In Paul's time being a slave and being a servant could be interchangeable. We know this was the case particularly in Colossae as the church met in Philemon's house and he owned slaves who were basically servants without pay (see Paul's letter to *Philemon*). Paul shows us that whenever we serve someone like a teacher or a boss we need to remember we are Christ's servants. Likewise Paul reminds bosses that they have a heavenly Boss they must serve.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he is a fair and kind Master to serve. Pray that whether or not we work for fair or kind masters we will do it with our whole heart as if we are working for the Lord.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord. Col 3:17

Show you know this week's verse in both word and deed by acting it out as you say it.

WEEK 8: June 24-31

DAY 1

INTRO:

Discuss as a family: for whom do you regularly pray?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ COLOSSIANS 4:2-4

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.

EXPLORE:

What did Paul say the Colossians' attitude to prayer should be? (*They should devote themselves to it*)

Who did he ask them to pray for? (*Us; this means Paul as their apostle, Timothy the co-author of this letter (1:1) and the local minister in the next city over (Ephesus) [and probably Epaphras, who was imprisoned with Paul and who was their minister]*)

What did he ask that they pray for them all? (*That God might open a door for the message of Christ to be proclaimed and that he would proclaim to clearly*)

APPLY:

Paul commanded the Colossians to pray. Linking this with the previous devotions shows how necessary this command is: we can only hope to relate rightly to others if the Lord is giving us the desire and strength to do so! Paul also told them to pray that the message about Jesus be handled faithfully by their ministers. How often do we pray for such people?

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that we have access to him through prayer. Pray that he might enable us to relate rightly to our wife or husband, our parents or children, our bosses or employees.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. Colossians 4:2

Write the words of this week's verse onto pieces of paper and attach them to different doors throughout your house. Get your family to gather all the words, assemble the verse and then pray that God might open a door for our ministers to proclaim the mystery of Christ as they should.

WEEK 8: June 24-31

DAY 2

INTRO:

Discuss as a family: what do you think you should do or say to help someone become a Christian?

RECAP:

Who did Paul specifically ask the Colossians to pray for?

READ COLOSSIANS 4:5-6

⁵Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

EXPLORE:

How did Paul advise the Colossians to act around non-Christians? (*Wisely*)

What did he write their conversation should be full of? (*Grace, and seasoned with salt*)

Why did he think it should be this way? (*So that the Colossians might know how to answer people's questions*)

APPLY:

Paul's advice on how to relate to those who don't know Jesus was really quite simple: act wisely and make the most of opportunities; speak in a gracious and flavourful way. Coupled with his command to pray in the previous devotion it really isn't as difficult as we might think to be used by God to lead others to Jesus!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he can use our wise actions and our gracious words to bring people to himself through Jesus. Pray that we will not worry about having all the right answers but that we will trust him to use what we do say.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. Colossians 4:2

Use this week's verse to pray for people you know who are outsiders to the Christian faith.

WEEK 8: June 24-31

DAY 3

INTRO:

Brainstorm with your family different ways that you might hear news from far away.

RECAP:

How did Paul say we need to act and speak towards nonbelievers?

READ COLOSSIANS 4:7-9

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.

EXPLORE:

How did Paul describe Tychicus? (*As a dear brother, a faithful minister and a fellow servant in the Lord*)

Why was Paul sending Tychicus to the Colossians? (*To tell them his news and so that he might encourage them*)

Who else was Paul sending with Tychicus? (*Onesimus, a Colossian himself*)

APPLY:

Paul was writing from prison and so his trusted friend Tychicus would deliver this letter, update the Colossians on Paul's circumstances and bring Onesimus, a runaway slave, back to the church. It must have relieved Paul to have such a trustworthy associate! There are many ways we can get news from other churches and missionary organisations today that don't require someone to actually come to visit us. Who do you regularly receive updates from so that you can pray for them? If you don't already receive Christian newsletters discuss with your family who you consider trustworthy and would like to pray for together.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that we live in a time when it is easy to pray for churches and Christian organisations across Australia and in other countries. Pray that we too might be considered dear brothers, faithful ministers and fellow servants in the Lord as we regularly pray for other Christians.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. Colossians 4:2

Use this week's verse to encourage you to regularly receive newsletters and to pray for other Christians!

WEEK 9: July 1-7

DAY 1

INTRO:

Imagine you were in prison. What might bring you comfort at such a time?

RECAP:

What did your children learn about at church on Sunday?

READ COLOSSIANS 4:10-11

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 co-workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me.

EXPLORE:

Who sent the Colossians greetings? (*Aristarchus, Mark and Justus*)

What was special about these men? (*They were the only Jews amongst Paul's co-workers*)

How did Paul feel about them? (*They were a comfort to him while he was in prison*)

APPLY:

In today's passage Paul starts to conclude his letter to the Colossians by sending them greetings. Because Paul had never been to this church there were a lot of people he wanted them to know said 'hi' and were praying for them. Unfortunately not many of these people were Jews; Paul was in prison in Rome because nearly all of his people had refused to accept Jesus as their promised Messiah. The thing that brought him comfort at this time was that some Jews not only believed but were in prison with him for also teaching others about Jesus.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that we have people around us who comfort us when we are low (praise God for them by name!). Pray that we might find comfort and joy as more and more people accept Jesus as God's promised king today.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

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

Colossians 4:12

Fold a piece of paper in half and draw a hand on it. Cut out the hand and then unfold the paper so that you have two praying hands joined in the centre. Write on it this week's verse so that you can begin to commit it to memory.

WEEK 9: July 1-7

DAY 2

INTRO:

What is something that you wrestle with in your Christian walk?

RECAP:

What brought Paul comfort while he was in prison?

READ COLOSSIANS 4:12-13

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.

EXPLORE:

Who was Epaphras? (*A Colossian who served Jesus*)

With what did Epaphras wrestle? (*He wrestled in prayer for the Colossians so that they might stand firm in the will of God*)

Who did Epaphras work hard for? (*The churches at Colossae, Laodicea and Hierapolis*)

APPLY:

This letter began with Paul praying that the Colossians would know God's will (1:9) and it ends with Epaphras wrestling in prayer for the Colossians to do just that. There might not be very much we wrestle with in our Christian walk; perhaps it all seems pretty straightforward to us particularly when we are young. However it would be a pretty great thing to be known to wrestle in prayer for a local church, let alone three like Epaphras!

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father that he has gifted some of his people to be faithful pray-ers. Pray that we might grow in our prayerfulness to the point where we wrestle in prayer for others.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

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

Colossians 4:12

Add to the hands you wrote this week's verse on in the previous devotion the names of a local church that your family will commit to regularly pray for in your devotional time (or go hard like Epaphras and pick three churches!).

WEEK 9: July 1-7

DAY 3

INTRO:

Share with your family the saddest ending to a movie or book that you have experienced.

RECAP:

What did Epaphras wrestle with in his Christian walk?

READ 2 TIMOTHY 1:11-15

¹¹I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher of the gospel. ¹²That is why I am suffering as I am. Yet this is no cause for shame, because I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day. ¹³What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. ¹⁵You know that everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me.

EXPLORE:

What was Paul convinced Jesus would do for him? (*Guard what he had entrusted to him*)

What did Paul challenge Timothy to do? (*Keep the pattern of sound teaching and guard the gospel with the help of the Holy Spirit*)

Why did he challenge him to do this? (*Because everyone else in the province of Asia had deserted Paul [and the gospel of which Paul was a herald, apostle and teacher]*)

APPLY:

Everyone loves a happy ending. However as we read 2 Timothy (which Paul wrote at the end of his life) we see there was no happy ending for the Colossians. Paul reports to Timothy that the Colossian church had not done the things Paul had written to them: as those who lived in the province of Asia they had not continued in the faith but deserted it.

PRAY:

Thank our Heavenly Father for this warning about falling away. Pray that we might not follow the example of the Colossians but that of Timothy. Ask that we might keep to sound teaching and guard the gospel entrusted to us with the help of the Spirit.

MEMORY VERSE: (OPTIONAL ACTIVITY TIME PERMITTING)

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

Colossians 4:12

Use this week's verse as inspiration to pray for the members of your family, wrestling in prayer for them to stand firm in all the will of God.



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