

Colossians

Take Root...Bear Fruit

Week Five

Hi again,

Last week we moved into the **"Interpret"** stage of Inductive Bible Study, where we answer the question, "What does it mean?" We began collecting tools that help us answer that question. The first item in our tool belt was "Context." In other words, questions about a passage are often answered by what comes before or after it.

One question we often should ask in Bible Study is "What does this WORD mean?" I say "should" because if we're honest we often skate right past important or unfamiliar words without questioning their meaning. Some words become so familiar to us we don't think about their meaning anymore. A favorite family movie, "The Princess Bride" features a villain whose pet expression is, "Inconceivable!" Eventually, another character challenges him, "I do not think that word means what you think it means." So true!

The second Interpretation Tool for our Bible Study Tool Belt is as obvious and underused as "Context." It's a **Dictionary**. The translators of your Bible chose the words they did for a reason. If you come across an unfamiliar word, or if you notice a word that seems important to the passage (maybe it's repeated a lot) look it up in the Dictionary. Even familiar words have shades of meaning that get lost with overuse (awesome!). You may be surprised at what you can learn from a dictionary, like where a word came from, or meanings it carried in the past that we've forgotten. It's important to remember that we use both of these Tools together. For a very simple illustration, your dictionary may give you several very different definitions for the word "trunk". The context in which the word is used lets you know which is the correct meaning.

Thanking God for His Word!

Cindy and Friends

Week Five Homework

Observe (What Do I SEE?)

Pray...Read...Mark up the passage...List 1-2 observations per verse.

Colossians 2:16-23 (NIV)

Observations

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. ¹⁸Do 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. ¹⁹He 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!"? ²²These are all destined to perish with

use, because they are based on human commands

and teachings. ²³Such regulations indeed have an

appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship,

their false humility and their harsh treatment of the

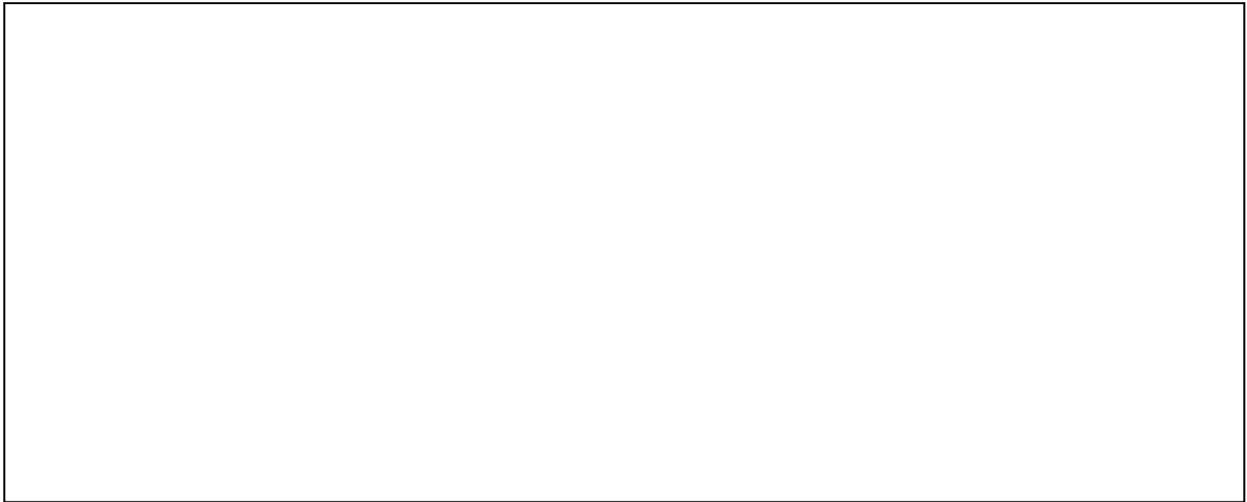
body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual

indulgence.

"Lump and Label"...Go back over the passage and look for 2-4 "lumps" of content that together express one idea. Give each "lump" a "label." Try to make your labels as brief as possible.

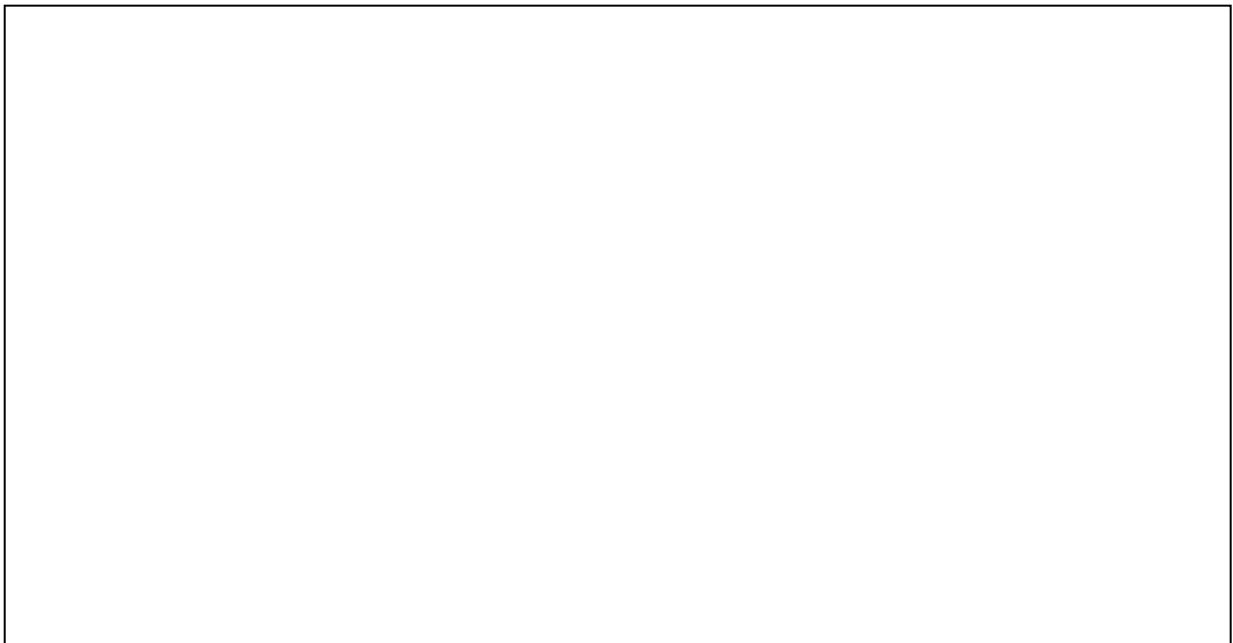
<i>Lump (verses)</i>	<i>Label</i>

List any questions you have about this passage.



Interpret (What Does it MEAN?)

Use a Dictionary to gain insight...if any of your questions involved a word whose meaning isn't clear, look it up in a dictionary. Or, if a word seems very important to the passage, be sure you're clear on what it means. Record what you find.



Apply (How Does it WORK?)

Make it practical. Now that you have spent some time looking in detail at God's Word, don't stop! Ask yourself, "How does this work...in general...and for ME?" You may find it helpful to look for...

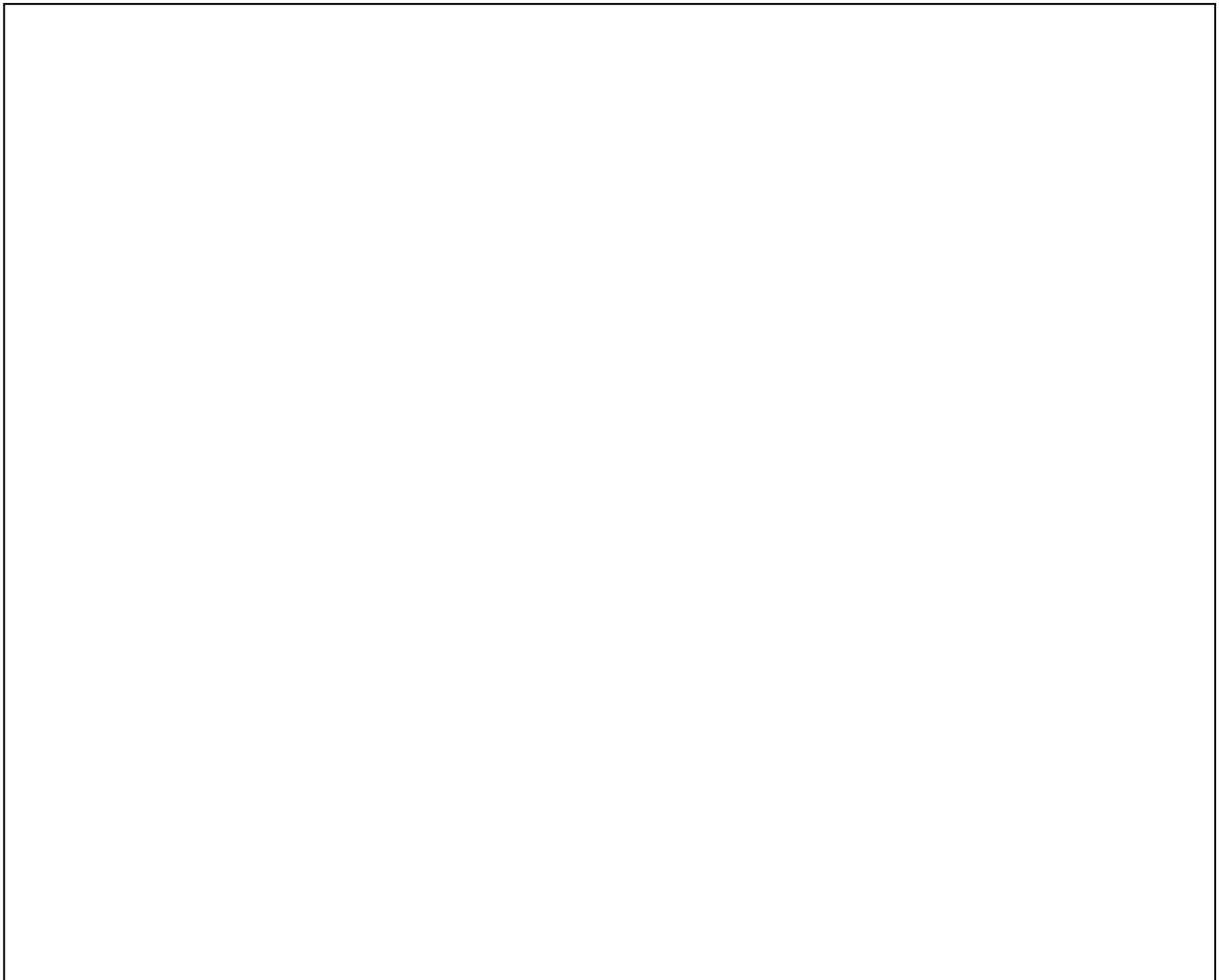
S—a SIN to avoid

P—a PROMISE to claim

E—an EXAMPLE to follow

C—a COMMAND to obey

K—KNOWLEDGE of God to believe

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying the lower half of the page. It is intended for the user to write their answers to the questions posed above.