

Colossians

Take Root...Bear Fruit

Week Nine

Ready to tie it all together?

We've already mentioned that the whole point of Bible Study is to Apply God's Word to our lives. In **the Apply Stage** of the Inductive Process we ask the question, "How does it WORK?" That's really a two part question in a sense. First, "How does it work in general?" and second, "How does it work for me?"

To answer the first half of the question, we can look for principles or **Timeless Truths** that have meaning for people across time and culture. Timeless Truths are not habits, action items, or goals. They are broader and more general, and will have meaning for everyone—regardless of where or when they live. Continuing the examples from last week:

- John 4:1-42 Jesus' followers must cross social boundaries to share the good news about Him.
- Philippians 2:1-5 God's people are unified when they humbly look out for each other's interests.

These are principles that are valid for people in New York, Moscow, or Johannesburg. They were appropriate for people in the First Century, the Middle Ages, and today. How you can cross a social boundary to share the Gospel, or humbly work for the best interests of other people may look different from how a teenager in Moscow or a monk in the Middle Ages did. That is a difference in **Personal Application**, answering the second half of the Apply question, "How does it work...for ME?" Try to make personal applications that are **"SMART"**:

- **Specific**—not be abstract or vague, but practical and concrete.
- **Measurable**—action items that allow you to measure success or completion. Who will hold you accountable, and when?
- **Attainable**—goals that are realistic. Don't set yourself up for failure by being overly ambitious or idealistic.
- **Relevant**—flowing from the Timeless Truth. Do things that really matter!
- **Time-Bound**—goals that extend "for the rest of my life" can be overwhelming.

One caution: The decisions we make to line our lives up with the Truth we see in God's Word are called Personal Applications because they are personal and individual—they do not necessarily work for all people. The life-change God desires in me is not what he wants for you. Missing this point can lead us into legalism

So, whatcha gonna do about it?

Cindy and Friends

Week Nine Homework

Observe (What Do I SEE?)

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

Colossians 4:2-18 (NIV)

Observations

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. 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.

Final Greetings

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.

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 fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have proved a comfort to me. 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. ¹⁴Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings. ¹⁵Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house.

¹⁶After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.

¹⁷Tell Archippus: "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord."

¹⁸I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

"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 your Interpretation Tools to gain insight...we have introduced several tools (listed below) to help us answer any of your questions. Use any that would be helpful to you.

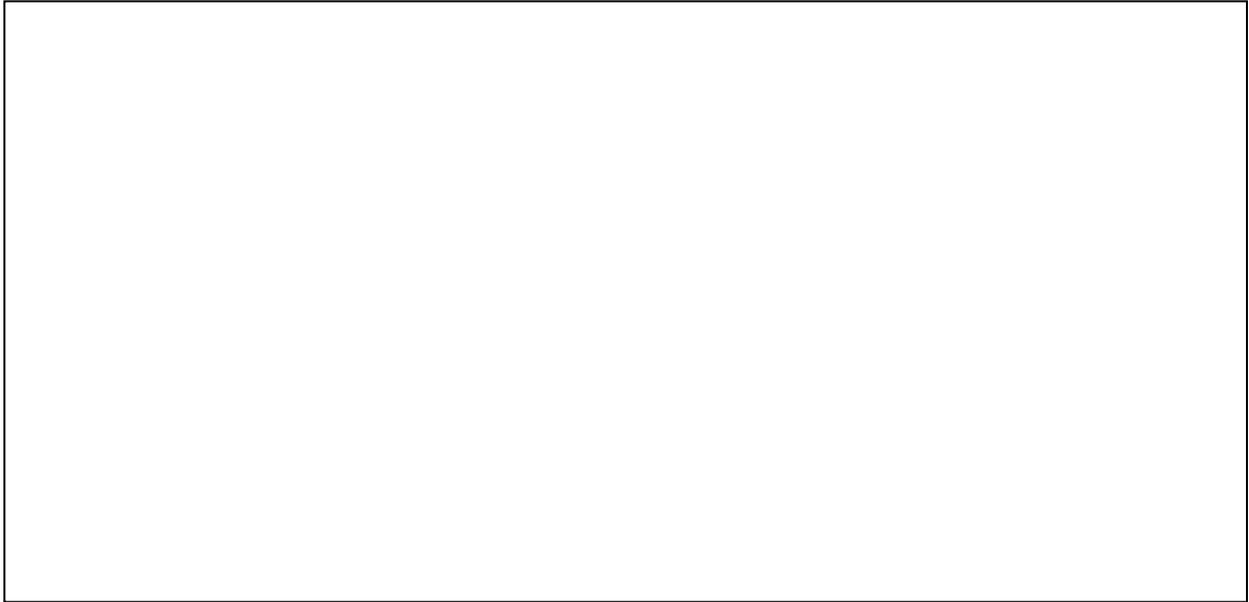
- Context
- Dictionary
- Alternate translations
- Cross references

Record what you find.

Bottom Line the Passage...in one sentence, answer the question, "What was that about?" Stick to what the passage meant to the writer and his original readers. Don't generalize the message at this time.

Apply (How Does it WORK?)

Write a Timeless Truth...identify a Principle based on this week's focus passage that applies to people in all times and cultures. (The SPECK acronym from past weeks may still be helpful to you.)



Write your Personal Application...what can you do about the Timeless Truth you wrote? Make it SMART.

