



C&L Designs
BIC revised

Storyboard



Vídeo 2: English



BIC1502
Exposition
Col. 1.3-8

Graphics Files

Audio Files:
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WELCOME
to this video summarizing the exposition of Col. 1.3-8

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In the BIC commentary series, the term "exposition" is used to refer to the modern applications of the scripture text. It is built on the foundation of the exegesis of the text, which seeks to establish the historical meaning of the text.

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In order to arrive at correct application, we will follow the "analogy of scripture" principle of interpretation. The goal is to discover modern situations that compare favorably with the ancient situaion being addressed in the scripture text. The more the two situations match each other, the more confident we can be in our application. Conversely, the less they match, the less confident we can be with our proposed application.

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By application, we mean the connecting points of timeless spiritual truth found in the historical meaning of the text that are relevant to a particular modern situation. Spiritual truth is derived from determining how God both revealed Himself and worked in the ancient situation of the text. "Timeless" comes into the picture when one particular ancient situation is repeated in more than one text. Such determinations of what applies

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and what doesn't demands a thorough understanding of the ancient text. And also, these require a deep understanding of the possible modern situation. Additionally, the interpreter of scripture must seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in order to find the most relevant application of the scripture text to his intended audience.

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Now we are ready to explore possible modern applications of the Proem in Colossians 1.3-8.¹ How we will approach this is not to generate a lengthy list of possible applications. Rather, we will approach the text using several creative methods that will immerse us into the text. These can provide you with suggestions for how to determine applications relevant to your use of this text in preaching and teaching. I will proposed possible modern situations and show how the text is relevant to them. But this is intended to provide a "how to" example, more than anything else.

1.0 Identify the Central Idea of the Text.

The goal here is to develop a concise summation of the core idea found in the text with a simple sentence statement. The CIT statement should capture the historical meaning with an emphasis upon spiritual truth that has been discovered through the exegesis of the text. This statement will establish the boundaries for possible modern applications. Once a particular modern application of the text has been decided upon, then a modified CIT statement should be developed with emphasis on how this text relates to the chosen modern application. This provides the line of biblical authority for your preaching and teaching of the scripture passage.

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Now let's go to the Proem of Col. 1.3-8. First, consider this CIT statement of this passage as a possible initial summation.

Paul and Timothy affirmed regularly to God their profound gratitude for the Colossians in how they were living out their conversion commitment to God through Christ.

This single sentence expression of thanksgiving in verses three through eight is structured as a prayer. The Proem acknowledges the ministry of Epaphras in first evangelizing the resi-
¹Be sure to read both the exegesis and exposition of Col. 1.3-8 in the BIC commentary series at Cranfordville.com. More details are provided in the online [commentary](#) pages.

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dents of Colossae several years earlier, and it places major emphasis upon the consistent spiritual growth of those who came to Christ. The two spiritual points in the Proem are the solid beginning in conversion to Christ, and then consistent commitment to God from conversion onward. The role of the apostolic Gospel in this is central.

What is a possible modern situation relevant to this ancient situation? One possibility is that of a modern seminary chapel service. You are to preach to this assembled group of these students who are training to become church leaders. What does this scripture passage have to say to these students? Out of this scenario, we can develop the modified CIT statement that links our audience to the text with direct biblical authority for our message.

Genuine Christian leadership exemplifies the model of leadership given by Paul, Timothy, and Epaphras to the Colossians.

Note that this statement is consistent with the initial CIT statement. It steps back to see the needs of modern seminary students for understanding biblical principles of leadership as an essential part of their preparation for Christian ministry. It acknowledges that here we have one important perspective on leadership, and not the entire biblical understanding of leadership.

2.0 Develop an Exegetical Outline of the Text.

This outline is built off the [Block Diagram](#) of Colossians 1.3-8. It amplifies the core concept of the above first CIT statement. As you review the diagram of either the [Greek](#) text, or of the [English](#) translation text, note some important aspects of these verses. The single sentence in these verses is built off the main clause that is found in the first three Greek words: Εὐχαριστοῦμεν τῷ θεῷ, "we are thanking God." Everything else in the sentence comes out of this core idea. First, there is the adjectival modifier phrase, πατρὶ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, that amplifies the verb direct object τῷ θεῷ: "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." As an appositive modifier, the connection is more intense between πατρὶ and θεῷ. Second, three sets of adverbial modifiers are connected to the verb Εὐχαριστοῦμεν: (1) πάντοτε,

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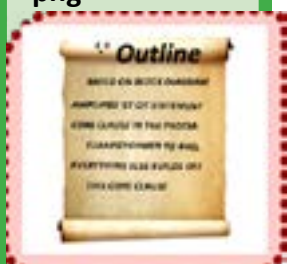
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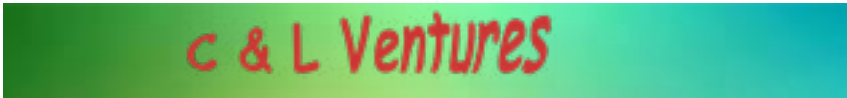


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"always," (2) προσευχόμενοι, "praying," and ἀκούσαντες, "after having heard." This aorist participle is expanded in verses four through eight.

From the block diagram and the initial CIT statement can come the following outline:

- I. Paul regularly gave thanks to God through Jesus Christ, v.3.**
 - A. His praying affirmed Christ as God's Son.**
 - B. His praying took place consistently.**
 - C. His praying centered on the Colossians.**
- II. Paul's thanksgiving to God centered on what was happening among the Colossians, vv. 4-8.**
 - A. His thanksgiving was motivated by Epaphras' report, vv. 4-5a.**
 - B. His thanksgiving focused on the Colossians' spiritual growth, vv. 5b-6.**
 - C. His thanksgiving praised the work of Epaphras, vv. 7-8.**

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This outline centers on the "then" meaning of the text. That is, the historical meaning. It seeks to give priority to thanksgiving to God, which is the point of the Greek main clause. The extension points of the two sets of modifiers provide the amplification of thanksgiving, as expressed in the second level of the outline. Paul's appreciation for both the Colossians and Epaphras is underscored in this outline. Although an outline reflecting modern western ways of thinking can not fully capture everything in an ancient expression of thought, this outline gets reasonably close to translating this ancient idea of thanksgiving into a clear modern expression.

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3.0 Develop a Semantic Outline of the Text.
 The leap across time from the "then" meaning to the "now" meaning especially comes at this point. The Semantic Outline focuses on the "now" perspective, and reflects the second CIT statement of the text. The simplest way to make this leap over time is to change the past tense verbs in the Exegetical Outline to present tense expressions. But this doesn't always work, as is the case here in Colossians. The Semantic Outline needs to focus on relating the text to the perceived need in the anticipated audience of the preaching and teaching of the passage.

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Because of the structure of the grammar of the Greek text and also the concepts expressed in Col. 1.3-8, we need to dig somewhat deeper into the ideas found here. The nature of this passage is exemplary. That is, we can see here a role model for effective leadership inside the Christian faith. When our targeted modern audience is a group of seminary students preparing for ministry, the connection of this scripture passage to our audience becomes obvious. To be clear, the passage doesn't cover all aspects of Christian leadership. But it gives us insight into some very basic ingredients. And these are vitally relevant to seminary students. Here is one possible Semantic Outline that centers on both the text and the modern targeted audience.

- I. Leaders should regularly give thanks to God, v. 3**
 - A. Their praying should affirm Christ as God's Son.**
 - B. Their praying should be consistent.**
 - C. Their praying should center on the congregation they serve.**

- II. Leaders should give thanks to God for what is happening in their group, vv. 4-8.**
 - A. Their thanksgiving should highlight the faith, love, and hope in their group, vv. 4-5a.**
 - B. Their thanksgiving should give emphasis to the continued acceptance of the true Gospel, vv. 5b-6.**
 - C. Their thanksgiving should be motivated by clear understanding of the situation in the group, vv. 7-8.**

Once the wording of the Semantic Outline is finalized, you are ready to begin working on a sermon based on Col. 1.3-8.

4.0 Develop a Sermon Brief of the Text.

By definition, a Sermon Brief is the beginnings of a full fledged sermon based on the chosen scripture text.² This is not a complete manuscript of the sermon. Instead, it leads to it, once a complete manuscript of the sermon. Instead, it leads to it, once a ²For a more detailed discussion of Sermon Brief see “Sermon Report Form” for Greek 202/302 at cranfordville. com: <http://cranfordville.com/Ser-rpt.html>. The required reports described in this page go into more detail than we will here. What I am proposing here is an abbreviated form of the above Sermon Brief.

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date for preaching has been set.

It contains two elements:

(1) *The sermon CIT statement developed from the two previous outlines. Here one possibility is:*

I want to inspire my audience to a deeper determination to become the same kind of leader as Paul, Timothy, and Epaphras.

(2) An outline of the sermon with explanatory notes.
Note the following as an example on how to develop the sermon outline.

INTRODUCTION

How do you lead a congregation effectively? During your seminary studies, I hope that you raise this question many times as you attempt to develop a leadership style for your ministry.

You will discover a wide variety of answers to this question. Some come out of scripture, but a larger number originate in the cultural setting of your ministry. Currently you are living in Texas during your studies. Is Texas culture a good source for understanding leadership? And especially secular Texas culture? Absolutely not! As a native Texan with ancestral roots reaching all the way back to the Alamo, I declare that Texas culture is a horrible source for understanding good leadership values. Bloated egotism, resulting in authoritarian models of leadership, predominate Texas culture. By and large, it promotes most everything that Jesus and the apostles condemned as heresy.

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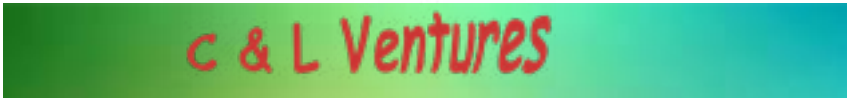
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As Baptists, we claim to be a scripture centered Christian group. But a real difference exists between claims and actual practice. My goal in this sermon is to nudge you toward immersing yourself in biblical values of good leadership.

Our scripture text today is Colossians 1.3-8. As the Proem to Paul's letter to the Christian house church groups at Colossae, it provides us with important insights into genuine Christian leadership. [Read the text.] In this passage, we don't see the complete picture of Christian leadership values. But we can discover some essential core values for being a godly leader of God's people. There are two essential points on "Being a Good Leader" that I want to underscore from this passage:

1. Make prayer central to your ministry, v. 3.
2. Center your leadership on God's people, vv. 4-8.

Now let's take a look at these points in the scripture text.

1. Good leadership makes prayer crucial, verse three.

{Note: three fundamental aspects to sermon development are Explanation, Illustration, and Application. Your creativity and the needs of your audience provide clues on how to blend these three things together to best suit your sermon. Here I will just list them in summary manner under each main sermon point.}

Explanation:

The biblical text of this passage is composed of only one sentence in all the verses. The foundational idea is very simple: "we are giving thanks to God." This is then expanded in two ways in the remainder of the long sentence. The noun "God" is qualified by "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The sonship of Christ is affirmed by this extension. Next, the core verb is modified by three adverbial expressions: "always," "praying for you," and "after having heard." Thus duration of thanksgiving, a structured prayer pattern, and the basis for thanksgiving are stressed.

Illustration:

What is prayer time? Paul's words suggest a continuation of his Jewish heritage of praying three times daily. What is implied here is the importance of deliberate times set aside each day in order to pray. I challenge you to structure your daily schedule to include times to express thanksgiving to God for the people you serve. And do this consistently, rather than spasmodically.

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Application:

Paul's example of praying raises a haunting question to us today: Are you praying regularly for God's people? Even during your student days, most of you have leadership roles of some kind in churches. You serve as a Sunday School teacher, an interim pastor, or part-time pastor of a weekend church. This provides a really good opportunity to implement this central value of good leadership. One basic reality from thanksgiving: it's almost impossible to not love those whom you thank God for every day.

II. Good leadership centers on God's people, vv. 4-8.

{Note: Paul's thanksgiving is for the Colossians. Verses four through six reflect Epaphras' report to the apostle about Colossae. Then verses seven and eight reflect Paul's appreciation for Epaphras.}

Explanation:

The participle phrase at the beginning of verse four is built off the aorist participle ἀκούσαντες, "after having heard," and it extends from verse four through verse eight. The focus is on the conversion and spiritual progress of the Colossian Christians under the ministry of Epaphras a native son, who evangelized and discipled the believers in the Lycus river valley. He faithfully proclaimed the true Apostolic Gospel to them. They enthusiastically embraced it and began to grow rapidly in their new Christian faith. Paul complements both them and Epaphras for this solid beginning spiritually. The apostle especially commends them for their consistent growth in the Christian faith. He carefully notes the key role that Epaphras played in this spiritual experience of the Colossians.

:Illustration:

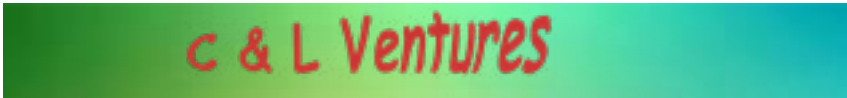
What is different between Epaphras and the false teachers mentioned in chapter two? Epaphras loved his hometown folks, while the false teachers only sought to manipulate these folks for their own glory. Epaphras preached the true Gospel, while the false teachers preached a corrupt, man-made message. That's often the modern difference between well known TV preachers and devoted faithful long term pastors of small congregations. That difference is the ἀγάπη kind of love. It sacrifices itself for the sake of those it loves.

Application:

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Remember always that God has called you into ministry not to serve yourself, but others. He will give you a church to serve, not to use. You will never be their boss. But always you must be their servant. Crucial to this role is thanksgiving and appreciation for the church. They will not be perfect, and may not treat you as they should. But your calling is to thank God for them and to love them passionately. Your love of them through Christ is the key of their love and appreciation of you and your calling as pastor. Your God-led ἀγάπη love will enable you to always speak Truth to them, even in warnings and admonitions.

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CONCLUSION

What can we learn from Colossians 1.3-8? A whole lot! But crucially two basic things. Pray for your people consistently with thanksgiving to God for them. Also, consistently preach and teach to them God's Word of Truth. It is indeed the Good News that informs them of God's grace and favor through His Son Jesus Christ. ἀγάπη love is central, both God's love and our love for God and others. Commit yourself today to these two basic values. Then you will know God's blessings in your ministry.

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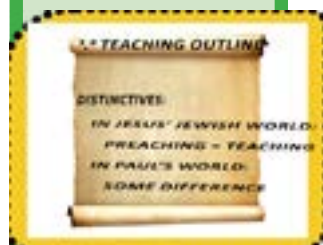
This Sermon Brief sketches out a strong biblical based sermon that takes seriously both the biblical text and the needs of its audience. Such preaching at this can and will be blessed of God.

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5.0 Develop a Teaching Outline of the Text.

What is the difference between preaching and teaching a biblical text? In the Jewish world of the early Jesus, not much difference existed. In the first two decades of Christianity (30 to 50 AD), Christian meetings reflected the same basic pattern as was found in the Jewish Friday evening synagogue sabbath service. Thus in the four gospels' account of Jesus, preaching (κηρύσσω) and teaching (διδάσκω) were basically synonymous terms. According to John 1.38, the latter term, in its noun form διδάσκαλος, reflects the Hebrew ῥαββί, "Rabbi," as Teacher. The commenting on the Old Testament scripture passage read in the meeting was normally by a guest rabbi and it centered on drawing applications of meaning from the passage. Discussion about these applications then followed, with different views being presented. The symbolic posture of authority for the rabbi was to be seated while delivering his comments. The closest Christian expressions to this are the two documents of Hebrews and James in the New Testament. In actuality, they are Jewish Christian sermons super-

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ficially recast by their authors as letters.

For the apostle Paul, ministering in both a Jewish and a Gentile setting from the late 40s to his death in 68 AD, a little distinction between preaching and teaching existed. What he said in the Jewish synagogue services was very much in line with the traditional pattern of the Jewish rabbi. But what he spoke in the Gentile public marketplace settings was more related to proclamation of the Gospel. The content of his message in both settings was essentially the same. But the delivery of that message was somewhat different in the public setting.

But in contemporary life in modern western culture, a distinction exists between preaching and teaching, especially at the point of the style of delivery. If what the preacher says from the pulpit is focused on informing his audience of some particular religious idea, then he is teaching. But his conversational manner of presenting his thoughts is consistent with the western idea of a teacher. On the other hand, if he focuses on calling for some reaction to his ideas, and he manner of speaking reflects passionate expression, he is preaching. In typical Baptist church life, the pastor is supposed to preach on Sunday morning, but can teach on Wednesday evening. Recent trends in modern American culture extend teaching to include all kinds of visual aids. And that includes framing his teaching around a PowerPoint presentation set of slides. The teaching may take the form of a strict lecture format or it may incorporate significant amounts of audience interaction.

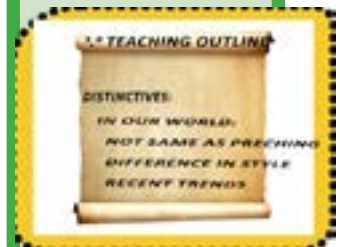
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From this latter perspective, a teaching plan for Col. 1.3-8 will be offered as an example. The example is created as a MS PowerPoint presentation. Here the assumed background is no longer the seminary chapel service. Instead, it is the seminary classroom. The content will remain similar to the seminary chapel sermon. But the manner of presentation shifts to informing, more than admonishing.

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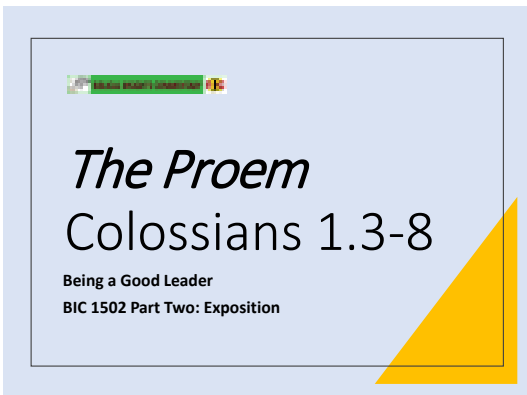
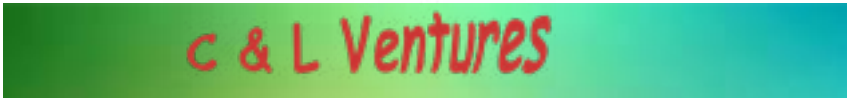
Slide One:

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The complete set of seven PPP slides is available in [the BIC1502 homepage](#) at cranfordville.com. Proper acknowledgment of the source is all that is required for usage.

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(Reading of the Text)

Slide Two:

The Proem
Colossians 1.3-8
"Being a Good Leader"

- 3 Εὐχαριστοῦμεν τῷ θεῷ πατρὶ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν προσευχόμενοι, 4 ἀκούσαντες τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην ἣν ἔχετε εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους 5 διὰ τὴν ἐλπίδα τὴν ἀποκειμένην ὑμῖν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ἣν προηκούσατε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου 6 τοῦ παρόντος εἰς ὑμᾶς, καθὼς καὶ ἐν παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ ἐστὶν καρποφορούμενον καὶ αὐξανόμενον καθὼς καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν, ἀφ' ἧς ἡμέρας ἠκούσατε καὶ ἐπέγνωτε τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ· 7 καθὼς ἐμάθετε ἀπὸ Ἐπαφρᾶ τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ συνδούλου ἡμῶν, ὃς ἐστὶν πιστὸς ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διάκονος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 8 ὃ καὶ δηλώσας ἡμῖν τὴν ὑμῶν ἀγάπην ἐν πνεύματι.

This contains the original text of Col. 1.3-8 in ancient Greek. This is of value to your audience as a visual reminder that we are working off a modern English translation of this text. It is very important to remember that the creation of this text was to address very real issues found in the Christian community of Colossae in the middle of the first Christian century. Koine Greek was the everyday language of the people living in the eastern parts of the first-century Roman Empire, including the province of Asia which included the Lycus River valley where Colossae was located.

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Slide 3:

The Proem
Colossians 1.3-8
"Being a Good Leader"



- 3 We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ always as we pray for you, 4 after having heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the saints, 5 because of the hope being stored up for you in Heaven, which you heard about beforehand in the Word of Truth, the Gospel, 6 which exists in you, just as both in all the world it is bearing fruit and growing just as also in you, from the very day you heard and grasped the grace of God in Truth; 7 just as you learned from Epaphras, our beloved fellow servant, who is a faithful in your behalf servant of Christ, 8 and the one who made known to us your love in the Spirit.

Slide 3 is a very literal translation of the original Greek text into modern American English. Always remember that translation means a loss of meaning in the source text when brought over into the receiver text. Going from an ancient Koine Greek text to a modern American English text means the loss of much of the original meaning. Recovering that meaning requires skilled knowledge of ancient Greek and the first century world. The use of proper methods of interpretation can regain much of that meaning which can be put in commentaries on the text. But a translation of the text will only recover up to 20 to 25% of the original meaning.

Slide 4:

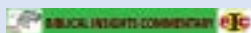
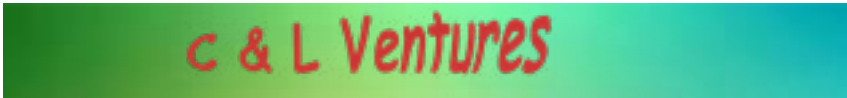
This is the introductory slide to the PPP presentation based study. Note carefully the suggestions for introducing the Bible study on Col. 1.3-8. Several items should be given in the introduction. These include stating your goal for the study, affirming a central theme of the study, expressed in a title, and a brief summation of the structure of the Greek text and how it comes over into an outline of the study. Be sure to emphasize relevancy of the text to the situation of your audience.

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Introduction

Let's take a close look at this scripture text.

Our goal is to discover relevant application to our lives today.

The assumed setting for this teaching plan: a seminary class on Pastoral Education.
The focus is on one biblical setting: The Letter to the Colossians & its Proem (1.3-8)
A biblical study rather than a systematic theology or biblical theology study.

The central idea to be developed focuses on "Being a Good Leader: A Biblical Perspective."
Derived from the examples here of Paul, Timothy, and Epaphras
This theme is but one of several possible applications of the text.

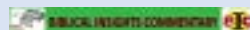
From a block diagram of the text, two main ideas emerge:

- 1) Prayers of thanksgiving are central to good leadership, v. 3.
- 2) Focusing on the needs of others is critical to good leadership, vv. 4-8.

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Slide 5:

Being a Good Leader means:



I. Prayers of thanksgiving central, v. 3

Let's take a close look at this scripture text.

Εὐχαριστοῦμεν τῷ θεῷ πατρὶ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν
προσευχόμενοι,
We give thanks to God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, always, as we pray for you.

We give thanks to God

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|           Father
|           of our Lord Jesus Christ
|
always
as we pray for you.

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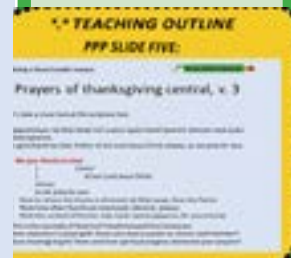
- Note to whom the thanks is directed: τῷ θεῷ πατρὶ, God, the Father
- Note how often thanks are expressed: πάντοτε, always
- Note the context of thanks: περὶ ὑμῶν προσευχόμενοι, for you praying

This is the example of Paul and Timothy toward the Colossians
How important is praying for those you lead as pastor or church staff member?
Does thanksgiving for them and their spiritual progress dominate your prayers?

This slide covers point one of the Teaching Outline of the passage. It centers on verse three, and understanding the thought connections between the main clause in the first three words (Εὐχαριστοῦμεν τῷ θεῷ, we are giving thanks to God), and the secondary ideas that expand this core idea. These are found in verses three b through verse eight. This is presented visually in the slide by the English expression of the Block Diagram of the Greek text.

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Slide 6:

Being a Good Leader means:

II. Focusing on others is central, v. 4-8

Let's take a close look at this scripture text.

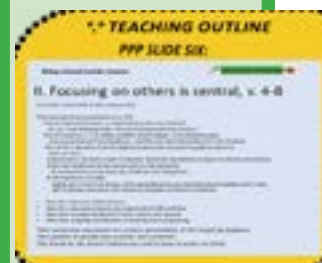
Three perspectives are present in vv. 4-8:
 That of Paul and Timothy: v. 4 Ακούσατες, after we heard of"
 & v. 8, ὁ και δηλώσας ἡμῖν, "the one having made known to us."
 That of Epaphras, v. 7-8, καθώς ἐμάθετε ἀπὸ Ἐπαφρά...ὁ και δηλώσας ἡμῖν,
 Just as you learned from Epaphras... and the one who informed us (cf. 4:12-13 also)
 That of the Colossians from the depiction given here based on Epaphras report to Paul, Vv. 4b-6,
 4 ἀκούσατες τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ και τὴν ἀγάπην ἣν ἔχετε εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους
 5 διὰ τὴν ἐλπίδα τὴν ἀποκεκμημένην ὑμῖν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς,
 ἣν προηκούσατε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου
 6 τοῦ παρόντος εἰς ὑμᾶς,
 καθώς και ἐν παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ ἔστιν καρποφορούμενον και αὐξανόμενον καθώς και ἐν ὑμῖν,
 ἀφ' ἧς ἡμέρας ἠκούσατε και ἐπέγνωτε τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ.

- Note the Colossians faith and love
- Note the Colossians hope as the outgrowth of faith and love
- Note their hearing the Word of Truth, which is the Gospel
- Note their ongoing commitment as bearing fruit and growing.

Their conversion was based on a correct presentation of the Gospel by Epaphras.

Their pattern of growth was constant and consistent.
 This should be the kind of ministry you seek to have in service to Christ.

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Slide six focuses on point two of the Teaching Outline. It covers verse four through verse eight. Three perspectives are highlighted: that of Paul and Timothy (verse 4a and verse 8a), that of Epaphras (verses 7 & 8), and that of the Colossians (vv. 4-6). Both actions and traits are presented in this material. Identifying them and relating them to your audience is an excellent way to bring out the spiritual truths of this passage. The connecting link of these is focusing on others.

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Slide 7:

Being a Good Leader means:

Conclusion

What can we say about good leadership from this passage?

- It must be people centered, rather than power oriented.
- It must be deeply grateful to God for the people being served.
- It must be based on the true apostolic Gospel, rather than on human derived understandings.

A ministry based on these values can and will be blessed of God.
 It will have life changing impact on the people being served.
 God will be glorified by such ministry.

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This slide is the Conclusion of the Teaching Outline. It draws three conclusions about the content of good leadership based on Colossians 1.3-8. It affirms three blessings from implementing these qualities of good leadership. Depending upon the needs of your targeted audience, you may want to go a different direction in summing up the study.



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SUMMARY CONCLUSION

Colossians 1.3-8 stands as the literary Proem of this letter. As such, its role was to strengthen the ties between the senders, Paul and Timothy, with the recipients, the house church groups in Colossae. Growing out of the Salutatio in 1.2b, the Proem affirms the devotion of Paul and Timothy to the spiritual well-being of the Colossians. In spite of the danger of the false teachers at work in the city, Paul and Timothy have been convinced by the report of Epaphras that the church began on the solid foundation of the apostolic Gospel, and that they were making good progress in spiritual growth based on that message. Thus, the letter seeks to both deepen their understanding of this Gospel message, and also to deepen their commitment to stay focused on this Gospel message.

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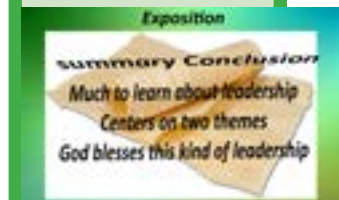
We have much to learn about good quality leadership from this scripture text. This centers on two themes: prayers of thanksgiving to God, and loving concern for others. When God provides you with a group of Christians to serve, always remember to frame that service by these two essential traits. Be thankful for them. Give yourself in loving care to them. Our God can and will bless such ministry as this.

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