

Worshipping Together

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankston.rpca.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on Colossians by John Calvin, William Hendriksen, and Kent Hughes.



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children

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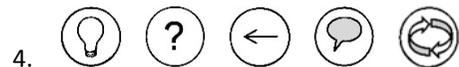
Weekly reading:
Philippians,
Colossians

Reading Colossians 1:1-2 Grace to you, and Peace

Notes Paul addresses fellow Christians in the church at Colosse – a city about 150 K east of Ephesus. It is likely that the church here was founded by Epaphras (1:7, 4:14) who was likely converted through Paul’s missionary ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19:10). Though Paul may have never been in Colosse (2:1-2) he learned of the church from Epaphras while they were in prison together for the sake of the gospel. (Philemon 23). Paul wrote this letter from prison and sent it with Tychicus to the church. (4:7-9)

Paul writes to these believing brothers and sisters about Christ. Christ is the foundation for their family relationship and their faith. The Colossians faced temptations to return to the pagan ways they had come to Christ out of or to mix Jewish traditions with Christianity in order to have a “fuller” experience. Yet Paul writes to exalt Jesus Christ to them. Christ’s fullness is sufficient and necessary – nothing else. So, Paul, as a God appointed apostle, writes a letter to this church by the help of God the Holy Spirit. He begins, as in many of his letters, reminding them that grace and peace are theirs (and ours also) because of God the Father and God the Son.

- Questions**
1. Who (likely) founded the church at Colosse?
 2. What was the basis of the Colossians and Paul’s relationship?
 3. What is ours because of God the Father and God the Son?



- Praise** Psalm 53a²
- Pray**
1. Rejoice with your family in the grace and peace you have in Jesus
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord’s Day you review the previous week’s readings and/or the previous or current week’s sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Weekly reading:
Philippians,
Colossians

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Reading Colossians 1:24-29 Him we preach

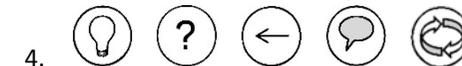
Notes Paul was willing not only to be a minister of the gospel, but to suffer as a Christian. Although his ministry was in some ways unique, all Christians can learn from him – and in a sense partner with him in this gospel ministry. (See Philippians 1:5)

Believers grow through their personal suffering, and the good they receive flows to others—thus edifying the Church... God’s servants benefit, and everyone benefits. For Paul, this is cause for rejoicing. This is why very often the suffering of a brother or sister in Christ is a great source of blessing to the Church, for their elevated character is transferred to fellow believers. (Hughes)

But also, in some way, Christ suffers as His people suffer. When Paul was persecuting the church, he was persecuting Jesus (Acts 9:5). Yet once saved, Paul suffered for Christ’s sake. *Although Christ by means of the afflictions which he endured rendered complete satisfaction to God, so that Paul is able to glory in nothing but the cross (Gal. 6:14), the enemies of Christ were not satisfied! They hated Jesus with insatiable hatred, and wanted to add to his afflictions. But since he is no longer physically present on earth, their arrows, which are meant especially for him, strike his followers.* (Hendriksen)

This suffering and perfecting Jesus, we proclaim, as Paul did.

- Questions**
1. How does Christians’ suffering help the church?
 2. How does Christians’ suffering add to Christ’s afflictions?
 3. Who can make someone perfect? And when?



- Praise** Psalm 53a
- Pray**
1. Pray that you and your family will be willing to suffer for the sake of Christ and His church, with God’s help
 2. Pray for your family
 3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
 4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God’s word tomorrow

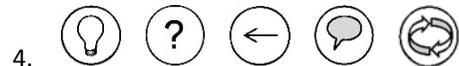
Reading Colossians 1:19-23 Reconciled to God in Jesus

Notes Why did God determine that the fullness of God should be evident in Jesus? Because in Jesus, God would reconcile the world to Himself and only God could overcome sin and rebellion and restore the world as He had created it.

And, He has done it! All things are reconciled in Christ. To be sure, not all are willing. Yet even those who continue in rebellion are subject to Christ. *Not only are their evil designs constantly being over-ruled for good, but these evil beings themselves have been, in principle, stripped of their power (Col. 2:15). They are brought into subjection (I Cor. 15:24-28; cf. Eph. 1:21, 22).* (Hendriksen)

We too, in Christ, have been reconciled to God. Though we had done wickedly, now in Christ, we are holy and blameless. Yet this certainty also comes with a warning. The Colossians were tempted to seek Jesus “plus”. But the blessing of reconciliation comes only as we continue to trust Christ and live for Him. *Divine preservation always presupposes human perseverance. Perseverance proves faith’s genuine character, and is therefore indispensable to salvation. To be sure, no one can continue in the faith in his own strength (John 15:5). The enabling grace of God is needed from start to finish (Phil. 2:12, 13). This, however, does not cancel human responsibility and activity. Yes, activity, continuous, sustained, strenuous effort (Heb. 12:14).* (Hendriksen)

- Questions**
1. What has God done to the world through Christ?
 2. What is our position before God in Christ?
 3. How are preservation and perseverance connected?



- Praise** Psalm 53a
Pray
1. Confess, with your family, that you will persevere in faith, with God’s help
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Colossians 1:3-8 We give thanks and pray

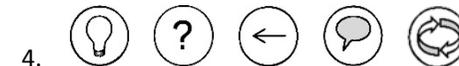
Notes Paul often writes of his thanksgiving for other Christians. He prays often and with thanks for God’s work in them. (as should we) This work is evident as God builds faith, love, and hope into Christians. *Faith, hope, and love are mentioned numerous times in Scripture as a sort of “apostolic shorthand” for genuine Christianity. None of these qualities can be manufactured by man; they all come from God.* (Hughes) Paul thanks God, and prays, for this work in them.

Even though these Christians faced temptations to look to Christ “plus”, Paul greets them as those who have faith in Christ. He is the one in Whom they have come to believe and Who has brought them out of darkness into light.

An evidence of this faith in Christ is a love for other Christians. In Christ, the Colossians have come to love each other. No matter what their background was they are now family in Jesus and in Jesus they love the members of the family. The Spirit (v8) is the agent of this love.

Christians also have a hope. *Christian hope is not mere wishing. It is a fervent yearning, confident expectation, and patient waiting for the fulfilment of God’s promises, a full Christ-centered (cf. Col. 1:27) assurance that these promises will indeed be realized.* (Hendriksen) What is your hope? Does it impact your faith and love as it did the Colossians? It will, as you believe the truth of the gospel.

- Questions**
1. What does Paul combine with his prayer (and why)?
 2. What are three qualities the Colossians have in Jesus?
 3. From whom had the Colossians learned these things?



- Praise** Psalm 53a
Pray
1. Commit yourself and your family to praying with thanksgiving for other church members, with God’s help.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Colossians 1:9-12 We don't stop praying for you

Notes How can we pray for each other in the church? Do you at times run out of words? Here we have a Spirit inspired prayer for other Christians that we can pray as Paul did for the Colossians.

Knowing God's will. This is not a knowledge attained by some secret means, rather it is the Spirit of God impressing the word of God on the hearts of the children of God.

Walking worthy. As we understand God's will, we live it out. *Paul prayed that the Colossians would walk their talk, that their knowledge of Christ...would produce a conduct which was worthy of the Lord, pleasing him in all respects.* (Hughes)

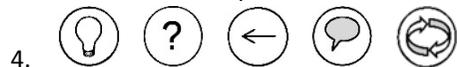
Being fruitful. *Paul attaches high value to good works viewed as the fruit — not the root — of grace. Eph. 2:8–10 is his own commentary.* (Hendriksen)

Increasingly knowing God. Not just knowing about God, but knowing Him. Who He is. What He has done for us.

Strength from Him yielding patience and joy. In Christ's power we can joyfully put up with difficult circumstances and difficult people!

Thanks that God makes us qualified. Our effort, our fruit, our knowledge, our walk, our strength are all important. Yet God in Christ gives all Christians our inheritance.

- Questions**
1. What can we pray for one another?
 2. How can we know God and His will?
 3. What makes us qualified as Christians?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 53a
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to praying these things for other church members, with God's help.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Colossians 1:13-18 He is to have first place!

Notes Here we see Christ in His glory – our Saviour and King. Like the Colossians we were lost in darkness, serving Satan as if he were king. Yet God has graciously brought all who are Christians in to Jesus' kingdom instead. And Who is this Great King of Glory?

He is the redeemer. The One who gave His life that we might have forgiveness of our sins. Meditate on this grace! God the Son died so that you might live.

He is God. In Jesus the invisible God could be seen. Though Adam and Eve were created in God's image, sin marred that image. Jesus, sinless, restored that image so that we can see what God is like, and even more amazingly, we can become what God is like.

He is the creator. All things were made by Him and even worldly and spiritual powers are under His authority and control. *That the phrase "the firstborn of every creature" (v15) cannot mean that the Son himself, too, is a creature, the first in a very long line, is clearly established by verse 16. He is prior to, distinct from, and highly exalted above every creature. As the firstborn he is the heir and ruler of all.* (Hendriksen)

He is the head of His church. No man heads the church. Only Christ. We are told these wonderful things about Him in order that we might recognise and give Him the first place – **in everything** – which is His rightful place.

- Questions**
1. Who is this great King of Glory?
 2. Why did Jesus die?
 3. How can we give Jesus His "first place"?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 53a
1. Rejoice with your family in prayer Christ died for you
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member