**The Letter of Paul**

**to the Colossians**

**Block Diagrammed**

One of the pressing needs of any serious student of Scripture is an understanding of the syntax of a given passage. Syntax refers to the interrelationships of paragraphs, sentences, phrases, clauses, and words. The purpose of Block Diagramming is to graphically illustrate the syntax of a passage of Scripture. The Block Diagramming process involves the laying out of a passage of Scripture by indenting subordinate linguistic units while maintaining the word order of the given text or translation. This allows the student of Scripture to determine the Divinely inspired structure of the passage, its key features, and main points, to enhance the study and understanding of God's Word.

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the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE (R), (C)

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**I.** **Christian Greetings 1:1-2**

**II. The Blessings of the Lord Jesus Christ** **1:3-23**

A. A Prompt for Thankfulness in Prayer :3-8

B. A Prompt for Supplication in Prayer :9-14

C. The Nature and Work of Christ :15-23

1. Christ’s divinity :15-16

2. Christ’s preeminence :17

3. Christ’s position and work :18-23

**III. The Christian Ministry** **1:24-2:3**

A. The Glad Anguish of Ministry :24

B. The Divine Bestowal of Ministry :25-27

C. The Efficient Method of Ministry 1:28-2:3

**IV. The Fruit of Christian Ministry** **2:4-23**

A. The Discernment which must be Exercised :4-5

B. The Steadfastness which must be Maintained :6-7

C. The Caution which must be Exercised :8-12

D. The Regeneration which must be Effected :13-14

E. The Liberty which must be Guarded :15-23

1. Christ has vanquished all authority :15

2. Christ alone is our Judge :16-17

3. Legalism exposed :18-19

4. Liberty defended :20-23

**V. The Application of Ministry: The Christian Life** **3:1-4:6**

A. Heaven-oriented Living 3:1-4

B. Sin-mortifying Living :5-8

C. Truth-grounded Living :9-11

D. Christ-like Living :12-13

E. Love-focused Living :14-15

F. Bible-centered Living :16

G. Glory-driven Living :17

H. Relation-building Living 3:18-4:1

I. Prayer-guided Living 4:2-4

J. Opportunity-minded Living 4:5-6

**VI. Concluding Remarks** **4:7-18**

A. Plans 4:7-9

B. Greetings 4:10-15

C. Instructions 4:16-18

\* Outline subject to change with further study

**I. Christian Greetings 1:1-2**

:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ

by the will of God,

and Timothy our brother,

:2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

**II. The Blessings of the Lord Jesus Christ 1:3-23**

**A. A Prompt for Gratitude in Prayer**

:3 We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

praying always for you,

:4 since we heard of your **faith** in Christ Jesus

and the **love** which you have for all the saints;

:5 because of the **hope** laid up for you in heaven,

of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the

gospel

:6 which has come to you,

just as in all the world also it is constantly bearing

fruit and increasing,

even as it has been doing in you also since the day you

heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth;

:7 just as you learned it from Epaphras,

our beloved fellow bond-servant,

who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,

:8 and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.

**B. A Prompt for Requests in Prayer**

:9 **For this reason** also,

since the day we heard of it,

we have not ceased to pray for you

and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His

will

in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

:10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord,

to please Him in all respects,

bearing fruit in every good work

and increasing in the knowledge of God;

:11 strengthened with all power,

according to His glorious might,

for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience;

joyously

:12 giving thanks to the Father,

who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of

the saints in Light.

:13 For He [who] rescued us from the domain of

darkness,

and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved

Son,

:14 in whom we have redemption,

the forgiveness of sins.

**C. Glimpses of the Redeemer’s Nature**

**1. The *Beloved Son’s* Face**

:15 He is the image of the invisible God,

**2. The *Beloved Son’s* Position**

the firstborn of all creation.

:16 For

by Him

all things were created,

both in the heavens and on earth,

visible and invisible,

whether thrones or dominions

or rulers or authorities—

all things have been created

through Him

and for Him.

**3. The *Beloved Son’s* Preeminence**

:17 He is before all things,

and

in Him

all things hold together.

**4. The *Beloved Son’s* Place**

:18 He is also head of the body, the church;

**5. The *Beloved Son’s* Prominence**

and He is the beginning,

the firstborn from the dead,

so that He Himself will come to have first place

in everything.

:19 For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the

fullness to dwell in Him,

:20 and

through Him

to reconcile all things to Himself,

having made peace

through the blood of His cross;

through Him, I say,

whether things on earth

or things in heaven.

:21 And although you were formerly alienated and

hostile in mind,

engaged in evil deeds,

:22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly

body through death,

in order to present you before Him

holy

and blameless

and beyond reproach—

:23 if indeed you continue in the faith

firmly established

and steadfast,

and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard,

which was proclaimed in all

creation under heaven,

and of which I, Paul, was made a

minister.

**III. The Christian Ministry 1:24-2:3**

**A. The Glad Anguish of Ministry :24**

:24 Now I rejoice

in my sufferings

for your sake,

and

in my flesh

I do my share

on behalf of His body,

which is the church,

in filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions.

**B. The Divine Bestowal of Ministry :25-27**

:25 Of this church I was made a minister

according to the stewardship from God

bestowed on me for your benefit,

so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God,

:26 that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past

ages and generations,

but has now been manifested to His saints,

:27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches

of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles,

which is Christ in you,

the hope of glory.

**C. The Efficient Method of Ministry :28-2:3**

:28 We proclaim Him,

admonishing every man

and teaching every man

with all wisdom,

so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

:29 For this purpose also I labor,

striving according to His power,

which mightily works within me.

2:1 For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on

your behalf

and for those who are at Laodicea,

and for all those who have not personally seen my

face,

:2 that their hearts may be encouraged,

having been knit together in love,

and attaining to all the wealth that comes from

the full assurance of understanding,

resulting in a true knowledge of God’s

mystery, that is, Christ Himself,

:3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of

wisdom and knowledge.

**IV. The Fruit of Christian Ministry 2:4-23**

**A. The Discernment Which Must Be Exercised**

:4 I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument.

:5 For even though I am absent in body,

nevertheless I am with you in spirit,

rejoicing to see your good discipline

and the stability of your faith in Christ.

**B. The Steadfastness Which Must Be Maintained**

:6 Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord,

so walk in Him,

:7 having been firmly rooted

and now being built up in Him and established in your faith,

just as you were instructed,

and overflowing with gratitude.

**C. The Caution Which Must Be Exercised**

:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty

deception,

according to the tradition of men,

according to the elementary principles of the world,

rather than according to Christ.

:9 For

in Him

all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

:10 and

in Him

you have been made complete,

and He is the head over all rule and authority;

:11 and

in Him

you were also circumcised

with a circumcision made without hands,

in the removal of the body of the flesh by the

circumcision of Christ;

:12 having been buried with Him in baptism,

in which you were also raised up with Him

through faith in the working of God,

who raised Him from the dead.

**D. The Regeneration Which Must Be Effected**

:13 When you were dead in your transgressions

and the uncircumcision of your flesh,

He made you alive together with Him,

having forgiven us all our transgressions,

:14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees

against us,

which was hostile to us;

and He has taken it out of the way,

having nailed it to the cross.

**E. The Liberty Which Must Be Guarded**

**1. Christ has vanquished all authority**

:15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities,

He made a public display of them,

having triumphed over them through Him.

**2. Christ alone is our Judge**

:16 Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink

or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—

:17 things which are a mere shadow of what is to come;

but the substance belongs to Christ.

**3. Legalism exposed**

:18 Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize

by delighting in self-abasement

and the worship of the angels,

taking his stand on visions he has seen,

inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,

:19 and not holding fast to the head,

from whom the entire body,

being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments,

grows with a growth which is from God.

**4. Liberty defended**

:20 If you have died with Christ

to the elementary principles of the world,

why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to

decrees, such as,

:21 “Do not handle,

do not taste,

do not touch!”

:22 (which all refer to things destined to perish with use)—

in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men?

:23 These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom

in self-made religion

and self-abasement

and severe treatment of the body,

but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.

**V. The Application of Ministry: The Christian Life 3:1-4:6**

**A. Heaven-oriented living**

:1 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ,

keep seeking the things above,

where Christ is,

seated at the right hand of God.

:2 Set your mind on the things above,

not on the things that are on earth.

:3 For you have died

and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

:4 When Christ,

who is our life,

is revealed,

then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

**B. Sin-mortifying Living**

:5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to

immorality,

impurity,

passion,

evil desire,

and greed,

which amounts to idolatry.

:6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come

upon the sons of disobedience,

:7 and

in them

you also once walked,

when you were living in them.

:8 But now you also, put them all aside:

anger,

wrath,

malice,

slander,

and abusive speech from your mouth.

**C. Truth-grounded Living**

:9 Do not lie to one another,

since you laid aside the old self

with its evil practices,

:10 and have put on the new self

who is being renewed

to a true knowledge

according to the image of the One who created him—

:11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between

Greek and Jew,

circumcised and uncircumcised,

barbarian, Scythian,

slave and freeman,

but Christ is all, and in all.

**D. Christ-like Living**

:12 So, as those who have been chosen of God,

holy and beloved,

put on a heart of

compassion,

kindness,

humility,

gentleness

and patience;

:13 bearing with one another,

and forgiving each other,

whoever has a complaint against anyone;

just as the Lord forgave you,

so also should you.

**E. Love-focused Living**

:14 Beyond all these things put on love,

which is the perfect bond of unity.

:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,

to which indeed you were called in one body;

and be thankful.

**F. Bible-centered Living**

:16 Let the word of Christ

richly

dwell

within you,

with all wisdom

teaching

and admonishing one another

with psalms

and hymns

and spiritual songs,

singing

with thankfulness

in your hearts

to God.

**G. Glory-driven Living**

:17 Whatever you do

in word

or deed,

do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,

giving thanks

through Him

to God the Father.

**H. Relation-building Living**

**1. in the Home**

:18 Wives, be subject to your husbands,

as is fitting in the Lord.

:19 Husbands, love your wives

and do not be embittered against them.

:20 Children, be obedient to your parents

in all things,

for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.

:21 Fathers, do not exasperate your children,

so that they will not lose heart.

**2. in the Market**

:22 Slaves,

in all things

obey those who are your masters on earth,

not with external service,

as those who merely please men,

but with sincerity of heart,

fearing the Lord.

:23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily,

as for the Lord

rather than for men,

:24 knowing that

from the Lord

you will receive the reward of the inheritance.

It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

:25 For he who does wrong will receive the consequences of the

wrong which he has done,

and that without partiality.

:1 Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness,

knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.

**I. Prayer-guided Living**

:2 Devote yourselves to prayer,

keeping alert in it

with an attitude of thanksgiving;

:3 praying at the same time for us as well,

that God will open up to us a door for the word,

so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ,

for which I have also been imprisoned;

:4 that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.

**J. Opportunity-minded Living**

:5 Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders,

making the most of the opportunity.

:6 Let your speech always be with grace,

as though seasoned with salt,

so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

**VI. Concluding Remarks 4:7-18**

**A. Plans**

:7 As to all my affairs, Tychicus,

our beloved brother

and faithful servant

and fellow bond-servant in the Lord,

will bring you information.

:8 For I have sent him to you for this very purpose,

that you may know about our circumstances

and that he may encourage your hearts;

:9 and with him Onesimus,

our faithful and beloved brother,

who is one of your number.

They will inform you about the whole situation here.

**B. Greetings**

:10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings;

and also Barnabas’s cousin Mark

(about whom you received instructions;

if he comes to you, welcome him);

:11 and also Jesus who is called Justus;

these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God

who are from the circumcision,

and they have proved to be an encouragement to me.

:12 Epaphras,

who is one of your number,

a bondslave of Jesus Christ,

sends you his greetings,

always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers,

that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of

God.

:13 For I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you

and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis.

:14 Luke,

the beloved physician,

sends you his greetings,

and also Demas.

:15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea

and also Nympha

and the church that is in her house.

**C. Instructions**

:16 When this letter is read among you,

have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans;

and you,

for your part

read my letter that is coming from Laodicea.

:17 Say to Archippus,

“Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord,

that you may fulfill it.”

:18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand.

Remember my imprisonment.

Grace be with you.