**Colossians 1:1-14**

Ice breaker: How do you like to communicate? How do you like to communicate the least?

When was the last time you got or sent a real letter? Do you send cards? (birthday, get well, sympathy)

Imagine you are writing a long letter to someone you have never met? What would be a reason for you to do that? What if you received a letter from someone you respected and had heard about but had never met? How would you respond to this letter. (Imagine if John MacArthur or Alistair Begg wrote a letter to our church and wanted to personally tell us what they had heard about us and what they felt they needed to say to us) Have you ever written to someone “famous” and he or she responded back?

1**.** How did Paul become an apostle? **(see Acts 9)? Interpretive question: Apostles had authority that no one else did at this time. Remember there were 12 plus Paul. Why do you think it is important that Paul make sure they knew he was an apostle?**

2. Who is Paul specifically writing to?

3. Where does our grace and peace come from? **Application question:**  **Would this be a greeting you could give others? How would you explain to them what you meant? Could you give this greeting to a nonbeliever?**

4. What two things is Paul thankful for in these people?

 I**nterpretation question: Why is the second one just as important as the first (see 1 John 3:14-16)**

5. Why is Paul thankful? **See 1 Peter 1:3-5-this would be an interpretive addition Application: What are you thankful for in our church?**

6. Where did they hear of “this” hope? **Interpretive question: What is the hope Paul is referring to? Titus 1:2, 2 Timothy 4:8. Application question: How often do you think about this hope?**

7. What has come to the whole world and is bearing fruit and increasing? **How would you explain the gospel to someone? See extra sheet on What is the gospel 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Application question: Is it bearing fruit and increasing today in the whole world?**  **What do we know about the church around the world- China, Inda, countries in Africa?** <https://www.persecution.com/globalprayerguide>

8. Who was Epaphras? See background sheet

9. **Why was it important for Paul to say “in the Spirit” in verse 8? (see Romans 15:30) Inter question**

10. Verse 9 What is Paul praying for them? **Interpretation question: Look up other translations to see how “filled with knowledge” is translated. Application question**: **What would be the danger of being filled with knowledge only? What do you usually pray for your loved ones, could this be a prayer you would add to that?** *Using words of scripture to pray*

11. Why is he praying this? What is the purpose of this prayer? (note “so as to”=purpose)

12. Look up the word Worthy? What does it mean? By doing this, what will happen? **(Application question When you read “walk in a worthy manner”, what do you picture? How are you “walking”)**

(Ruth Chou Simons will deal much more on this in her book study for next week)

13. Verse 11- How are we being strengthened? Why are we being strengthened? Where do we get this strength?

14. What has the Father done? Because of this, what are we able to do**? Interpretation questions? What does “qualified” mean? (Can look up in other translations and look up in a dictionary)**

15. What does “delivered” mean? See Acts 26:18 **Interpretive question: Who has done this?**

16. **What is redemption? Interpretive question: Isaiah 44:22-24 Look up the word in a dictionary and a Bible dictionary if you wish.**

17. **Other observation ideas-** Go through the text again and circle or color…God, Father, Christ, Jesus, Son.

Now notice all the “him” and “he” that refers to them. (sure wish they would capitalize those)

Also, read through again in other translations. Read it out loud.

**18. Other interpretation questions** - What do you not understand? What would you like more understanding about? What is confusing? We may not have the answers right now but can look up later in a trusted commentary. (Also, Pastor Ryan is planning on preaching on Colossians this fall)

**19. Other application questions** - What expressions, words or thoughts have really “hit” **you personally**  as you went through this?

Who is Christ in my life? What has He done? Where is my hope? Why is this hope so important for me How can I pray for others? Am I growing in my faith? Is the knowledge (reading the Bible, listening to sermons) actually changing me? Am I applying what knowledge I have to gain wisdom? Is there anything I need to focus on and understand?