

A "Flow-of-Thought" Diagram of Paul's Prayer in Colossians 1:3-13

In Colossians 1:3-13, the apostle Paul prays for the Colossians. It is a wonderful prayer - and a good example for us - but it is also a complex prayer.

Below is an attempt to put this complex passage into a format that shows the *flow of thought*. Only the words necessary to show this flow are included, so you will have to look up the verses in the New Testament. (The wording used below is based on the New International Version, but it is *not* a direct quote from that translation.) Note that within each "paragraph," parallel concepts are arranged in columns.

In this diagram, an arrow indicates that the line beneath it connects to the last thought in the *previous* line. (If the words had been aligned *directly under* the previous thought, the diagram would be too wide for the page.) The phrase "for this reason" (v. 9) connects to the entire previous paragraph - and requires us to think back to everything before it. (That previous paragraph is summarized in brackets just below that phrase.)

The diagram, as it is currently formatted, is the first step in studying this passage. If you were analyzing this passage, you might want to mark parallel concepts, relationships between the different parts of the passage, significant words or concepts that are repeated in different parts of the passage, and any other observations you might make. This could be done by circling the words, by using arrows or other types symbols, by writing notes along the edge, etc. (This would be easier to do by hand, rather than with a keyboard. So I have not done it here.) You might also want to bring in various insights you find in other passages (being careful to interpret each passage in its own context).

Remember that this is just a "guide" - the real studying and meditating (thinking) about the passage is up to you.
