

Colossians 1:12-20

An Original Translation from the Textus Receptus by Tyler Robbins

Participle Verb, Nominative (*subject*), Accusative (*Direct Object of Verb*), Dative (*indirect object of verb*),
Verb, Genitive, Infinitive, Preposition, Adverb, Conjunction

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1. FINISHED TRANSLATION:

¹²Giving thanks to the Father, who made you acceptable to share in the saints' inheritance in the light, ¹³who rescued us from the jurisdiction of the darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we now have the redemption, that is, the forgiveness of sins.

¹⁵He is the exact likeness of the invisible God, the favored heir over all creation, ¹⁶because by Him everything was created in the heavens and on the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, dominions, rulers or authorities. Everything has been created by Him and for Him, ¹⁷because He Himself is earlier than everything and everything always holds together because of Him.

¹⁸Also, He is the head of the body; that is, of the congregation. He is the Ruler, the first-born from the dead so that He alone will always have first place in everything, ¹⁹because *the Father* is always pleased for all the fullness to reside in Christ, ²⁰and through Him to reconcile everything to Himself. Christ made peace by the blood of His cross, through Himself – whether on the earth or in the heavens.

2. THOUGHT-FLOW DIAGRAM:

- ¹²Giving thanks to the Father,
 - o who made you acceptable to share in the saints' inheritance in the light,
 - o ¹³who rescued us from the jurisdiction of the darkness
 - o and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,
 - ¹⁴in whom we now have the redemption, that is, the forgiveness of sins.
- ¹⁵He is the exact likeness of the invisible God,

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- the favored heir over all creation,
 - ¹⁶because by Him everything was created in the heavens and on the earth,
 - visible and invisible,
 - whether thrones, dominions, rulers or authorities.
 - Everything has been created by Him and for Him,
 - ¹⁷because He Himself is earlier than everything
 - and everything always holds together because of Him.
- ¹⁸Also, He is the head of the body, that is, of the congregation.
- He is the Ruler, the first-born from the dead
 - so that He alone will always have first place in everything,
 - ¹⁹because *the Father* is always pleased
 - for all the fullness to reside in Christ,
 - ²⁰and through Him to reconcile everything to Himself.
 - Christ made peace by the blood of His cross, through Himself –
 - whether on the earth or in the heavens.

3. TEXTUAL-CRITICAL ISSUES:

- Below is the Greek text in H.A. Scrivener's *Textus Receptus* (SCR) with the differences between it and the Byzantine Text (BYZ - Robinson & Pierpont) and the UBS-5 (GNT).
 - BYZ differences are highlighted in pink
 - UBS-5 differences are highlighted in blue

¹²εὐχαριστοῦντες τῷ πατρὶ τῷ ἰκανώσαντι ἡμᾶς^(a) εἰς τὴν μερίδα τοῦ κλήρου τῶν ἁγίων ἐν τῷ φωτί,
¹³ὃς ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ σκότους, καὶ μετέστησεν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ, ¹⁴ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ,^(b) τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν·
¹⁵ὃς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως· ¹⁶ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα, τὰ^(c) ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ τὰ^(c) ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τὰ ὀρατὰ καὶ τὰ ἀόρατα, εἴτε θρόνοι, εἴτε κυριότητες, εἴτε ἀρχαί, εἴτε ἐξουσίαι· τὰ πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἔκτισται· ¹⁷καὶ αὐτός ἐστι πρὸ πάντων, καὶ τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκεν· ¹⁸καὶ αὐτός ἐστι ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ σώματος, τῆς ἐκκλησίας· ὃς ἐστὶν ἀρχή, πρωτότοκος ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν, ἵνα γένηται ἐν πᾶσιν αὐτὸς πρωτεύων· ¹⁹ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ εὐδόκησε πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα κατοικῆσαι, ²⁰καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτόν, εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ αὐτοῦ, δι' αὐτοῦ, εἴτε τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, εἴτε τὰ ἐν^(d) τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

a. ἡμᾶς vs. ὑμᾶς:

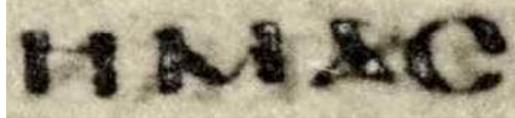
- The personal pronoun here is the difference between these two translation options:
 - SCR/BYZ: “Giving thanks to the Father, who made **us** acceptable . . .”
 - UBS-5: “Giving thanks to the Father, who made **you** acceptable . . .”
- There are early manuscripts supporting each reading; for example:

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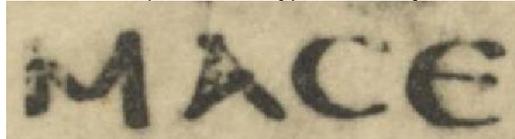
- Codex Alexandrinus (5th century), reads “us”



-
- Codex Vaticanus (5th century), reads “you”



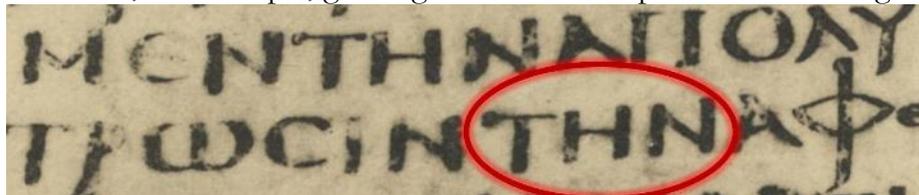
-
- Codex Sinaiticus (4th century), reads “you”



- Either option is theologically “correct,” and it makes no real difference which reading you accept
- Contextually, I believe “you” is the better option, because Colossians 1:12 comes at the end of a string of exhortations directed at the recipients (ὁμᾶς), which began in Colossians 1:10.

b. διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ:

- This phrase (“through His blood”) is almost certainly not original
 - It doesn’t appear in any manuscripts before the 13th century
 - Even the BYZ drops this reading!
- The original reading was “in whom we now have the redemption, that is, the forgiveness . . .”
 - Codex Sinaiticus, for example, goes right from “redemption” to “the forgiveness:”



-
- This really breaks my heart – this addition, which is unique to the TR, is theologically correct

c. τὰ . . . τὰ:

- These two articles appear in SCR and BYZ, and are absent from GNT
- An early papyri document (p46 – ca. 200 A.D.) does not contain these articles
- Codex Sinaiticus (ca. 4th century) did not contain it either, but a later hand scribbled the reading in above the line:

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- Therefore, I did not translate these articles and ignored them completely

d. ἐν:

- This preposition appears in both SCR and GNT, but BYZ has the preposition ἐπι
- The differences in prepositions literally makes no difference whatsoever; each has a *spatial* reference. I stayed with ἐν

4. DETAILED TRANSLATION:

Col 1:12	εὐχαριστοῦντες	τῷ	πατρὶ	τῷ	ἱκανώσαντι	ὑμᾶς	εἰς	τὴν	μερίδα	τοῦ	κλήρου	τῶν	ἁγίων
	parpnm	dsm	dsm	dsm	aapdsm	1 st ,pl,a	prep	asf	asf	gsm	gsm	gpm	gpm
	they are giving thanks	to	Father	the	he qualified	you	into	the	share	of the	portion, part, inheritance	of the	saints
Giving thanks to the Father,¹ who made you² acceptable³ to⁴ share⁵ in the saints⁶ inheritance⁷													

¹ τῷ πατρὶ: (1) **Classification** - a *dative of direct object*, receiving the action of the participle εὐχαριστοῦντες. (2) **Article** - the article signifies that the Father is a *monadic noun*, a one of a kind and unique Person.

² ὑμᾶς: (1) **Textual Issue** - this is the GNT reading; see the section on textual-critical issues for more information. (2) **Case** - the pronoun is in the accusative case to indicate it is the *direct object* of the participle ἱκανώσαντι. (3) **Antecedent** - the antecedent is “you” (ὑμᾶς), the recipients, from Colossians 1:10.

³ ἱκανώσαντι: (1) **Classification** - an adjectival, attributive participle, modifying the noun τῷ πατρὶ. (2) **Voice** - a *simple active voice*, indicating the subject (God) is performing the action of the participle. (3) **Tense** - a *constative aorist*, referring to the historical event of the recipient’s individual salvation. (4) **Definition** - Friberg defines ἱκανώσαντι in this context as, “make sufficient, qualify, make adequate or competent for something,” (s.v. “14093 ἱκανόω”). This is precisely the sense in which Tyndale (followed by the KJV) translated this as “made us meet.” I did not want to use the word “qualified,” because I fear it would give ammunition to a more synergistic view of salvation; e.g. “God qualified us, and we seal the deal.” I don’t want “qualification” to be taken in that sense.

⁴ The preposition εἰς is expressing *purpose*.

⁵ τὴν μερίδα: (1) **Case**: in the accusative case because it is the object of the preposition εἰς. (2) **Article** - the article *particularizes the abstract noun*.

⁶ τῶν ἁγίων: (1) **Case** - I believe this is a *genitive of possession*. The inheritance or portion is something which has been given to individual saints according to the pleasure of the Father’s good will (cf. Eph 1:5). It belongs to them, not by right, but by the sovereign mercy, grace, love and kindness of the Father.

⁷ τοῦ κλήρου: (1) **Definition** - BDAG defines the noun, in this context, is defined as, “that which is assigned by lot or simply given as a portion or share, portion, share,” (s.v. “4273 κληρος,” 2). Tyndale was the one who translated this as “inheritance,” and this simply cannot be improved upon. Using the gloss “portion” simply won’t do. (2) **Case** - I believe this is a *partitive genitive*, modifying the head noun (“share”) by describing the whole of which it is a part. See Murray J. Harris,

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ἐν	τῷ	φωτί,	Col 1:13	ὃς	ἔρρυσάτο	ἡμᾶς	ἐκ	τῆς	ἐξουσίας	τοῦ	σκότους,	καὶ	μετέστησεν	εἰς
prep	dsm	dsm		rel,nsm	3 rd ,s,aor,p(d),i	1 st ,pl,a	prep	gsf	gsf	gsn	gsn	conj	3 rd ,s,aor,a,i	prep
in	the	light		who	He rescued	us	from	the	jurisdiction	of the	darkness	and	He removed/ transferred	into
in⁸ the light,⁹			who¹⁰ rescued¹¹ us¹² from¹³ the jurisdiction¹⁴ of the darkness¹⁵ and¹⁶ transferred¹⁷ us to¹⁸											

Colossians and Philemon, in *Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: B&H, 2010; Kindle reprint), KL 1406-1410. For stylistic reasons, I dropped the word “of.”

⁸ The preposition ἐν is expressing *sphere*, particularly the idea of a “jurisdiction of the light” as contrasted with the “jurisdiction of darkness” in the next verse. I could have added this into the text, but I opted instead to change “of the saints” to “saints,” and therefore make it clear that “the light” is the inheritance they share (e.g. ISV, NET).

⁹ τῷ φωτί is in the dative case because it is the object of the preposition ἐν.

¹⁰ ὃς: (1) **Antecedent** – the antecedent is the Father (τῷ πατρὶ). Even though “the Father” is in the dative case, relative pronouns will often agree with their antecedent’s *natural* gender, rather than the grammatical gender (Young, *Intermediate Grammar*, 76). (2) **Case** – the *subject nominative* of the sentence.

¹¹ ἔρρυσάτο: (1) **Definition** – Friberg defines as ἔρρυσάτο as, “of bringing someone out of severe and acute danger save, deliver, rescue,” (s.v. “24042 ῥύομαι”). (2) **Voice** – a *deponent passive* with an active meaning; God performed the action of the verb. (3) **Tense** – a *constative aorist*, referring to a historical event in the past. (4) **Mood** – a *declarative indicative*.

¹² ἡμᾶς: (1) **Classification** – this is an *inclusive* personal pronoun, encompassing Paul, his readers and every single believer who ever reads this epistle. (2) **Case** – the pronoun is in the accusative case to signify that it is the *direct object* which receives the action of the verb ἔρρυσάτο.

¹³ The preposition ἐκ is expressing *disassociation*.

¹⁴ ἐξουσίας: (1) **Definition** – Gingrich defines this noun, in this context, as *domain* or *jurisdiction* (s.v. “2409 ἐξουσία,” 4.b.). BDAG reads, “the sphere in which power is exercised,” (s.v. “2817 ἐξουσία,” 6). (2) **Case** – in the genitive case because it is the object of the preposition ἐκ.

¹⁵ σκότους: (1) **Case** – this is an *attributive genitive*, describing an attribute of the noun “jurisdiction.”

¹⁶ The conjunction καὶ is a *simple additive*.

¹⁷ μετέστησεν: (1) **Voice** – a *simple active*, meaning the Father performed the action of the verb. (2) **Tense** – a *constative aorist*, referring to a historical event in the past. (3) **Mood** – a *declarative indicative*.

¹⁸ The preposition εἰς is expressing *space* in a metaphorical sense.

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τὴν	βασιλείαν	τοῦ	υἱοῦ	τῆς	ἀγάπης	αὐτοῦ,	Col 1:14	ἐν	ᾧ	ἔχομεν	τὴν	ἀπολύτρωσιν	διὰ	τοῦ
asf	asf	gsm	gsm	gsf	gsf	gsf		prep	rel,dsm	1 st ,pl,p,a,i	asf	asf	prep	gsm
the	kingdom	of the	son	of the	love	his		in	whom	we are having	the	freedom/release/redemption	by	the
the kingdom¹⁹ of His²⁰ beloved²¹ Son,²²							in²³ whom²⁴ we now have²⁵ the redemption,²⁶							

αἵματος	αὐτοῦ,	τὴν	ἄφεσιν	τῶν	ἁμαρτιῶν·
gsm	gsm	asf	asf	gpf	gpf
blood	His	the	pardon/forgiveness	of the	sins
that is, the forgiveness²⁷ of sins.²⁸					

¹⁹ τὴν βασιλείαν is in the accusative case because it is the object of the preposition εἰς.

²⁰ αὐτοῦ is a *possessive genitive*. The Son belongs to the Father.

²¹ τῆς ἀγάπης is an *attributive genitive*, describing a characteristic of the head noun (i.e. the Son).

²² τοῦ υἱοῦ is a *possessive genitive*. The Son owns His kingdom – it belongs to Him.

²³ The preposition ἐν is *spatial*, although it would be intriguing to take it as expressing *purpose*; in which case the translation would read “because of whom . . .” No English translation does this, however, so I’ll resist the urge! Some translations do take the preposition to be expressing *agency* (ISV).

²⁴ ᾧ: (1) **Case** – the pronoun is in the dative case because it is the object of the preposition ἐν. (2) **Antecedent** – the Father’s “beloved Son,” Jesus Christ.

²⁵ ἔχομεν: (1) **Voice** – a *causative active*, where the subject (Jesus) is the indirect cause of the inclusive audience having freedom from sin. Wallace stated, “The subject is not the direct agent of the act, but the source behind it,” (*Greek Grammar Beyond Basics*, 412). (2) **Tense** – a *present of existing results*, where Paul focuses on the present results of a past action. Harris supports this classification; “the pres. χομεν stresses the ongoing and permanent result of the Father’s threefold action,” (*Colossians and Philemon*, KL 1478-1479). Therefore, I translated this as, “we **now** have.” (3) **Mood** – a *declarative indicative*.

²⁶ τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν: (1) **Definition** - the sense of this verb is release from slavery; a price paid to secure liberty (cf. BDAG, s.v. “967 ἀπολύτρωσις;” 2). (2) **Case** – an *accusative of direct object*.

²⁷ τὴν ἄφεσιν: (1) **Case** – an *accusative of apposition*, further describing the direct object τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν. Therefore, I added a brief explanatory aside “that is.”

²⁸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν is a *genitive of reference*, limiting the adjective to a particular frame of reference. Forgiveness with regards to *what?* Sin!

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Col 1:15	ὃς	ἐστίν	εἰκὼν	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	τοῦ	ἀοράτου,	πρωτότοκος	πάσης	κτίσεως	Col 1:16	ὅτι	ἐν	αὐτῷ
	rel,nsm	3 rd ,s,p,a,i	nsf	gsm	gsm	gsm	gsm	nsm	gsf	gsf		conj	prep	dsm
	who	He is	image likeness	of	God	of the	invisible	firstborn	of all	creation		because	in	to him
He ²⁹ is ³⁰ the exact likeness ³¹ of the invisible ³² God ³³ , the favored heir ³⁴ over all creation, ³⁵											because ³⁶ by ³⁷ Him ³⁸			

²⁹ ὃς: (1) **Antecedent** – the pronoun’s antecedent is Jesus Christ, “His dear Son” (τοῦ υἱοῦ τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ from Col 1:13). Although the antecedent is in the genitive case and doesn’t match the nominative pronoun here, Young cautions that the pronoun may agree with the natural gender of the antecedent, rather than the grammatical gender (*Intermediate Greek*, 76). Some translations keep the “who,” and don’t supply the implied “He” (e.g. KJV, Tyndale). (2) **Case** – a *subject nominative*, functioning as the topic of the sentence.

³⁰ ἐστίν: (1) **Voice** – a *simple active* voice. (2) **Tense** – a *gnomic present*, indicating a timeless truth. (3) **Mood** – a *declarative indicative*.

³¹ εἰκὼν: (1) **Definition** - This likeness is specifically not to a crafted object (cf. BDAG, s.v. “2260 εἰκὼν,” 2), but a living thing. Murray J. Harris observed, “The degree of resemblance between the archetype and the copy must be determined by the word’s context but could range from a partial or superficial resemblance to a complete or essential likeness. Given 1:19 and 2:9, εἰκὼν here signifies that Jesus is an exact, as well as a visible, representation of God,” (*Colossians and Philemon*, in *Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. [Nashville, TN: B&H, 2010; Kindle reprint], KL 1612-1615). (2) **Case** – a *predicative nominative*, identifying the subject ὃς (“Christ”).

³² I believe ἀοράτου is an *attributive genitive*, describing a characteristic of God.

³³ I believe τοῦ Θεοῦ of a *genitive of possession*, making it clear that this *image* or *likeness* is God’s, and Christ bears this image.

³⁴ πρωτότοκος: (1) **Definition** - I think the best gloss might just be “favored heir.” BDAG observed that πρωτότοκος in this context is meant figuratively. More specifically it, “pert. to having special status associated with a firstborn,” (s.v. “6400 πρωτότοκος,” 2). “The special status enjoyed by a firstborn son as heir apparent in Israel is an implicit component of πρ. in ref. to such a son . . .” I’m thinking specifically about the concept of the firstborn being the heir-apparent, the one who will inherit all things, has the preeminence over his fellows, and carries his father’s name onward. As Richard R. Melick has noted, “the meaning of privilege predominates in the passage,” (*Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, vol. 32, NAC [Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991], 216). See the discussion by Wilhelm Michaelis in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 6:878–880, s.v. “πρωτότοκος”). (2) **Case** - a *predicative nominative*, identifying the subject ὃς (“Christ”).

³⁵ I take κτίσεως to be a *genitive of subordination*. This is a subset of the *objective genitive*, and it is translated with the gloss “over,” (cf. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond Basics*, 104-105). Most grammars don’t have this category at all; Young certainly doesn’t and Harris quips that this is “a category unknown to the standard grammars,” although he favors classifying it as an objective genitive (*Colossians and Philemon*, KL 1636-1637). Wallace also suggests a *genitive of reference*, which Melick agrees with (*Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, 217). Harris also suggests a genitive of comparison, but in order to make this work you must translate πρωτότοκος in a temporal sense, which I do not believe is correct. What is quite clear is that this is *not* a partitive genitive, where Jesus would be the first-born part of all creation. The context will not allow this viewpoint.

³⁶ The conjunction ὅτι is expressing the *grounds* for Paul’s first statement.

³⁷ I believe the preposition ἐν is expressing *agency*.

³⁸ αὐτῷ: (1) **Case** – this is in the dative case because it is the object of the preposition ἐν. (2) **Antecedent** – Christ is the antecedent.

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ἐκτίσθη	τὰ	πάντα,	τὰ	ἐν	τοῖς	οὐρανοῖς	καὶ	τὰ	ἐπὶ	τῆς	γῆς,	τὰ	ὄρατα	καὶ	τὰ	ἀόρατα,
3 rd ,s,aor,pass,i	npr	npr	npr	prep	dpm	dpm	conj	npr	prep	gsf	gsf	npr	npr	conj	npr	npr
it was created	the	everything	the	in	the	heavens	and	the	upon	the	earth	the	visible	and	the	invisible
everything³⁹ was created⁴⁰ in⁴¹ the heavens⁴² and⁴³ on⁴⁴ the earth,⁴⁵ visible⁴⁶ and⁴⁷ invisible,⁴⁸																

³⁹ τὰ πάντα is the *subject nominative*, indicating it is the topic of the sentence.

⁴⁰ ἐκτίσθη: (1) **Voice** – passive voice to *thematize the subject* of the sentence – i.e. creation. (2) **Tense** – a *constative aorist*, presenting creation as a historical event without any further commentary. (3) **Mood** – a *declarative indicative*.

⁴¹ The preposition ἐν is expressing *space*.

⁴² τοῖς οὐρανοῖς is in the dative case because it is the object of the preposition ἐν.

⁴³ The conjunction καὶ is a *simple additive*.

⁴⁴ The preposition ἐπὶ is expressing *space*.

⁴⁵ τῆς γῆς is in the genitive case because it is the object of the preposition ἐπὶ.

⁴⁶ τὰ ὄρατα is a *predicate nominative* of the subject τὰ πάντα.

⁴⁷ The conjunction καὶ is a *simple additive*.

⁴⁸ τὰ ἀόρατα is a *predicate nominative* of the subject τὰ πάντα.

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εἴτε	θρόνοι,	εἴτε	κυριότητες,	εἴτε	ἀρχαί,	εἴτε	ἐξουσίαι,	τὰ	πάντα	δι’	αὐτοῦ	καὶ	εἰς	αὐτὸν
conj	npm	conj	npm	conj	npf	conj	npf	npn	npn	prep	gsm	conj	prep	asm
whether	thrones	whether	dominions bearers of ruling power	whether	rulers	whether	authorities	the	everything	through	him	and	into	him
whether thrones,⁴⁹ dominions,⁵⁰ rulers⁵¹ or authorities.⁵² Everything⁵³ has been created⁵⁴ by⁵⁵ Him⁵⁶ and⁵⁷ for⁵⁸ Him⁵⁹														

⁴⁹ θρόνοι is a *predicate nominative* of the subject τὰ πάντα.

⁵⁰ κυριότητες is a *predicate nominative* of the subject τὰ πάντα.

⁵¹ ἀρχαί is a *predicate nominative* of the subject τὰ πάντα.

⁵² ἐξουσίαι is a *predicate nominative* of the subject τὰ πάντα.

⁵³ τὰ πάντα is the *subject nominative* once again.

⁵⁴ ἐκτισται: (1) **Voice** – passive voice to *thematize* the subject of the sentence – i.e. creation. (2) **Tense** – an *intensive perfect*, describing an event which resulted in a new state of affairs. (3) **Mood** – a *declarative indicative*.

⁵⁵ The preposition δι’ is expressing *agency*.

⁵⁶ αὐτοῦ: (1) **Case** – the pronoun is in the genitive case because it is the object of the preposition δι’. (2) **Antecedent** – the antecedent is Jesus Christ.

⁵⁷ The conjunction καὶ is a *simple additive*.

⁵⁸ The preposition εἰς is expressing *benefaction*.

⁵⁹ αὐτὸν: (1) **Case** – the pronoun is in the accusative case because it is the object of the preposition εἰς. (2) **Antecedent** – the antecedent is Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:12-20

An Original Translation from the Textus Receptus by Tyler Robbins

Participle Verb, Nominative (*subject*), Accusative (*Direct Object of Verb*), Dative (*indirect object of verb*),
Verb, Genitive, Infinitive, Preposition, Adverb, Conjunction

ἔκτισται	Col 1:17	καὶ	αὐτός	ἔστι	πρὸ	πάντων	καὶ	τὰ	πάντα	ἐν	αὐτῷ	συνέστηκε.	Col 1:18	καὶ	αὐτός
3 rd ,s,per,pass,i		conj	nsm	3 rd ,s,p,a,i	prep	gpm	conj	npr	npr	prep	dsm	3 rd ,s,per,a,i		conj	nsm
it has been created		and	him	He is	before	everything	and	the	everything	by	him	it has held together, endured		and	he
because⁶⁰ He Himself⁶¹ is⁶² earlier than⁶³ everything⁶⁴ and everything⁶⁵ always holds together⁶⁶ because of⁶⁷ Him.⁶⁸													Also,⁶⁹ He⁷⁰		

⁶⁰ I believe the conjunction **καὶ** is expressing *reason*. It could be a simple additive, but I believe this phrase is the reason why everything has been created by Him and for Him – because He is earlier than everything, etc.

⁶¹ **αὐτός**: (1) **Case** – the *subject nominative* of the sentence. (2) **Antecedent** – Jesus Christ. (3) **Translation** – I believe the pronoun is functioning reflexively, therefore I translated it as “Himself” (cf. NET). I also believe this phrase is bringing the previous sentence to a crescendo (see my footnote on the conjunction **καὶ**, below), so I see the reflexive as being appropriate.

⁶² **ἔστι**: (1) **Voice** – a *simple active*, indicating the subject (Jesus Christ) is performing the action of the verb. (2) **Tense** – a *gnomic present*, indicating a timeless truth. (3) **Mood** – a *declarative indicative*.

⁶³ The preposition **πρὸ** is expressing *time*. BDAG defines it, in this context, as, “marker of a point of time prior to another point of time, earlier than, before,” (s.v. “6148 **προ**,” 2). Another option is that it expresses rank, in which case it could be translated something like, “Christ is preeminent over all things.” However, I believe Paul is emphasizing Christ’s role in creation here, so I went with a temporal translation. He goes on to discuss Christ’s preeminence in the next verse. However, Harris cautions, “While **πρὸ** does not often denote precedence in importance (BDAG 864c cites Jas 5: 12; 1 Pet 4: 8), it would seem unwise to exclude here this notion of supremacy of status, given the use of **πρωτότοκος** in v. 15 and of **πρωτεύων** in v. 18,” (*Colossians and Philemon*, KL 1733-1735).

⁶⁴ **πάντων**: (1) **Case** - in the genitive case because it is the object of the preposition **πρὸ**.

⁶⁵ **τὰ πάντα** is the *predicate nominative* of the subject **αὐτός**.

⁶⁶ **συνέστηκε**: (1) **Voice** – *simple active* voice, indicating that the subject, Jesus Christ (**αὐτός**), is performing the action of the verb. (2) **Tense** – a *gnomic perfect*, expressing a timeless truth. (3) **Mood** - a *declarative indicative*.

⁶⁷ The preposition **ἐν** is expressing *reason*. This is not the usual interpretation; most translations and commentators see the preposition as expressing *agency*. Harris, for example, sees a *spatial* flavor (*Colossians and Philemon*, KL 1742-1743). However, I don’t see a reason why *reason* wouldn’t fit the context (see, for example, Heb 1:3).

⁶⁸ **αὐτῷ**: (1) **Case** – in the dative case because it is the object of the preposition **ἐν**.

⁶⁹ I believe the conjunction **καὶ** is *adjunctive*.

⁷⁰ **αὐτός**: (1) **Case** – the *subject nominative* of the sentence. (2) **Antecedent** – Jesus Christ. (3) **Translation** – I kept it as “He,” instead of interpreting it reflexively, as I did in the previous verse.

Colossians 1:12-20

An Original Translation from the Textus Receptus by Tyler Robbins

Participle Verb, Nominative (*subject*), Accusative (*Direct Object of Verb*), Dative (*indirect object of verb*), Verb, Genitive, Infinitive, Preposition, Adverb, Conjunction

ἐστιν	ἡ	κεφαλή	τοῦ	σώματος,	τῆς	ἐκκλησίας.	ὃς	ἐστιν	ἀρχή,	πρωτότοκος	ἐκ	τῶν	νεκρῶν,
3 rd ,s,p,a,i	nsf	nsf	gsm	gsm	gsf	gsf	nsm	3 rd ,s,p,a,i	nsf	nsm	prep	gpm	gpm
He is	the	head	of the	body	of the	congregation	who	He is	beginning	first-born	from	the	dead
is ⁷¹ the head ⁷² of the body, ⁷³ that is, of the congregation. ⁷⁴ He ⁷⁵ is ⁷⁶ the Ruler, ⁷⁷ the first-born ⁷⁸ from ⁷⁹ the dead ⁸⁰ so that ⁸¹													

⁷¹ ἐστιν: (1) **Voice** – a *simple active*, indicating the subject (Jesus Christ) is performing the action of the verb. (2) **Tense** – a *gnomic present*, indicating a timeless truth. (3) **Mood** – a *declarative indicative*.

⁷² ἡ κεφαλή is the *predicate nominative* of the subject αὐτός.

⁷³ τοῦ σώματος is a *genitive of reference*.

⁷⁴ τῆς ἐκκλησίας is a *genitive of apposition*, expressing more information about the adjacent genitive noun σώματος (“the body”). Of the major translations, only William Tyndale brought the force of the apposition by his rendering; “And he is the head of the body **that is to wit** of the congregation.”

⁷⁵ ὃς: (1) **Antecedent** – the relative pronoun refers back to the antecedent αὐτός, the subject nominative of the sentence. (2) **Case** – this pronoun is in the nominative case to indicate that it modifies the nominative antecedent.

⁷⁶ ἐστιν: (1) **Voice** – a *simple active*, indicating the subject (Jesus Christ) is performing the action of the verb. (2) **Tense** – a *gnomic present*, indicating a timeless truth. (3) **Mood** – a *declarative indicative*.

⁷⁷ ἀρχή: (1) **Case** - the *predicate nominative* of the pronoun ὃς. (2) **Translation** – the word can either be referring to time or authority. TDNT observed that, “ἀρχή always signifies ‘primacy,’ whether in time: ‘beginning,’ principium, or in rank: ‘power,’ ‘dominion,’ ‘office,’” (Gerhard Delling, in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–], 1:479; s.v. “ἀρχή”). Context will tell you which one is meant.

In the context of this passage, I think *authority* is what is in mind here. Paul has just introduced the authority theme in this very verse by stating that Christ is “the head of the body.” It makes perfect sense to then take ἀρχή as expressing authority, and what follows is even more clear – how else could Jesus demonstrate his sovereignty and rule over all creation by raising from the dead!?

Authorities are split on this one. BDAG classifies it as expressing *time* (s.v. “1153 ἀρχή,” 2). TDNT opts for *authority* (s.v. “ἀρχή,” 1:484). Melick preferred *authority* (*Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, 222). N.T. Wright straddled the fence and introduced shades of both possible meanings in his commentary (*Colossians and Philemon*, vol. 12, TNTC [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986], 78). Murray J. Harris went for *time* (*Colossians and Philemon*, KL 1766-1768).

I don’t think that *time* works here. πρωτότοκος (“first-born”) is a nominative of apposition to ἀρχή, providing more specific information about the “ruler.” I cannot understand how Jesus could be said to be the “originator” or “first-cause” (which is the true sense of the Greek), and then use the term “firstborn from the dead” to further explain that. Jesus is the first cause of creation because . . . He is the first One raised from the dead! This makes little sense. However, if we understand Jesus to be the “ruler,” and thus the first-born from the dead, then we have a much more convincing case. After all, Scripture does tell us that Jesus raised *Himself* from the dead (cf. Mk 9:9; Jn 2:19, 10:18 and the possible use of the direct middle in Mk 9:31).

⁷⁸ πρωτότοκος (“first-born”) is a *nominative of apposition* to ἀρχή.

⁷⁹ The preposition ἐκ is expressing *space*.

⁸⁰ τῶν νεκρῶν is in the genitive case because it is the object of the preposition ἐκ.

⁸¹ The conjunction ἵνα is expressing *purpose*.

Colossians 1:12-20

An Original Translation from the Textus Receptus by Tyler Robbins

Participle Verb, Nominative (*subject*), Accusative (*Direct Object of Verb*), Dative (*indirect object of verb*), Verb, Genitive, Infinitive, Preposition, Adverb, Conjunction

ἵνα	γένηται	ἐν	πᾶσιν	αὐτὸς	πρωτεύων	Col 1:19	ὅτι	ἐν	αὐτῷ	εὐδόκησε	πᾶν	τὸ	πλήρωμα	κατοικῆσαι
conj	3 rd ,s,p,m,sub(d)	prep	dpn	nsm	parpnm		conj	prep	dsm	3 rd ,s,aor,a,i	nsn	nsn	nsn	aor,a,inf
that	He may become	by	everything	he	He is having first place		because	in	him	He was well resolved	all	the	fullness	dwells
He alone ⁸² will always ⁸³ have first place ⁸⁴ in ⁸⁵ everything; ⁸⁶							because ⁸⁷ the Father ⁸⁸ is always pleased ⁸⁹ for all ⁹⁰ the fullness ⁹¹ to reside ⁹² in ⁹³ Christ, ⁹⁴							

⁸² I believe that the personal pronoun αὐτός is being used to give specific emphasis to the subject of the sentence – Jesus. Therefore, I translated it with as “He alone.”

⁸³ γένηται: (1) **Voice** – a *deponent middle* expressing a *simple active* voice, indicating that the subject Jesus Christ (“αὐτός”) is performing the action of the verb. (2) **Tense** – a *gnomic present*, expressing a timeless truth or maxim. Therefore, I added the word “always.” (3) **Mood** – subjunctive mood in a *purpose clause*, answering the implied question about *why* Jesus is the beginning and the first-born from the dead.

Wallace observed that the subjunctive does not automatically indicate doubt about the outcome, as the standard “might” or “may” gloss that first-year Greek students learn implies it does. “We must not suppose that this use of the subjunctive necessarily implies any doubt about the fulfillment of the verbal action on the part of the speaker. This may or may not be so; each case must be judged on its own merits. The subjunctive is used, however, because it answers the implicit deliberative question. Further, many instances of purpose clauses shade off into result as well, especially when the divine will is in view,” (*Greek Grammar Beyond Basics*, 472). Therefore, I abandoned the gloss “might,” and went with “will.” Only the NASB goes this route. KJV, NKJV, ESV, NET, Tyndale, LEB and ISV each retain “may” or “might.” However, I don’t think the context leaves room for doubt about the outcome!

⁸⁴ πρωτεύων: (1) **Classification** – an adverbial participle, modifying the verb γένηται in a *complementary* way. (2) **Case** – a *predicate nominative* of the verb γένηται. (3) **Voice** – a *simple active*, indicating that Jesus is performing the action of the verb. (4) **Tense** – a *gnomic present*, expressing a timeless truth, like the verb it modifies.

⁸⁵ The preposition ἐν is expressing *sphere*.

⁸⁶ πᾶσιν is in the dative case because it is the object of the preposition ἐν.

⁸⁷ The conjunction ὅτι is expressing *reason*.

⁸⁸ Who is performing the action of the verb? Could it be Christ Himself? Is Christ pleased for all His own fullness to dwell in His own incarnate self? This would be modalistic. Clearly, *somebody* (a person who can perform an action of a verb) is pleased for all His own fullness to always dwell in the Son (another person, the antecedent of αὐτῷ). I take this Person to be the Father.

⁸⁹ εὐδόκησε: (1) **Translation** – BDAG defines the verb, in this context, as, “to consider someth. as good and therefore worthy of choice, consent, determine, resolve,” (s.v. “3214 εὐδοκέω,” 2). Gingrich had much the same classification, “consider good, consent, resolve,” (s.v. “2791 εὐδοκέω”). Therefore, I translated as “resolve.” (2) **Voice** – a *simple active*. (3) **Tense** – a *gnomic aorist*, indicating a timeless concept. All God’s fullness has *always* dwelt in the Son. This is not merely a historical event, for that would open the door to Arianism or some bizarre form of adoptionism. (4) **Mood** – a *declarative indicative*.

⁹⁰ πᾶν is the *predicate nominative* of the subject nominative πλήρωμα.

⁹¹ τὸ πλήρωμα is the *subject nominative* of the sentence.

⁹² κατοικῆσαι is an anarthrous, simple infinitive modifying the verb εὐδόκησε in a *complementary* way.

⁹³ I believe the preposition is expressing *association*. See Young’s discussion on how the concept of being “in Christ” is better categorized as association, not a metaphorical use of space (*Intermediate Grammar*, 96).

⁹⁴ αὐτῷ: (1) **Case** – in the dative case because it is the object of the preposition ἐν. (2) **Translation** – I believe the antecedent of the personal pronoun is Jesus Christ, so I translated it that way.

Colossians 1:12-20

An Original Translation from the Textus Receptus by Tyler Robbins

Participle Verb, Nominative (*subject*), Accusative (*Direct Object of Verb*), Dative (*indirect object of verb*),
Verb, Genitive, Infinitive, Preposition, Adverb, Conjunction

Col 1:20	καὶ	δι'	αὐτοῦ	ἀποκαταλλάξαι	τὰ	πάντα	εἰς	αὐτόν,	εἰρηνοποιήσας	διὰ	τοῦ	αἵματος	τοῦ
	conj	prep	gsm	aor,a,inf	nprn	nprn	prep	asm	aarpsm	prep	gsm	gsm	gsm
	and	through	him	has been reconciled	the	everything	into	him	he made peace	through	the	blood	of the
and ⁹⁵ through ⁹⁶ Him ⁹⁷ to reconcile ⁹⁸ everything ⁹⁹ to ¹⁰⁰ Himself. ¹⁰¹ Christ made peace ¹⁰² by ¹⁰³ the blood ¹⁰⁴ of													

σταυροῦ	αὐτοῦ,	δι'	αὐτοῦ,	εἴτε	τὰ	ἐπὶ	τῆς	γῆς,	εἴτε	τὰ	ἐν	τοῖς	οὐρανοῖς.
gsm	gsm	prep	gsm	conj	nprn	prep	gsf	gsf	conj	nprn	prep	dprn	dprn
cross	his	through	him	whether	the	on	the	earth	whether	the	in	the	heavens
His ¹⁰⁵ cross, ¹⁰⁶ through ¹⁰⁷ Himself ¹⁰⁸ – whether on ¹⁰⁹ the earth ¹¹⁰ or in ¹¹¹ the heavens. ¹¹²													

⁹⁵ The conjunction καὶ is a *simple additive*.

⁹⁶ The preposition δι' is expressing *means*.

⁹⁷ αὐτοῦ: (1) **Case** - the pronoun is in the genitive case because it is the object of the preposition δι'. (2) **Antecedent** – the antecedent is Jesus Christ.

⁹⁸ ἀποκαταλλάξαι is a simple, anarthrous infinitive modifying the verb εὐδόκησε in a *complementary* way.

⁹⁹ τὰ πάντα is the *subject nominative* of the sentence.

¹⁰⁰ I take the preposition εἰς to be expressing sort of an abstract *spherical* concept (cf. BDAG, s.v. “2292 εἰς,” 4).

¹⁰¹ αὐτόν: (1) **Case** – the pronoun is in the accusative case because it is the object of the preposition εἰς. (2) **Antecedent** – the implied antecedent is God, who is not specifically mentioned, but whose presence is implied in Colossians 1:19. See Harris (*Colossians*, KL 1834ff).

¹⁰² εἰρηνοποιήσας: (1) **Classification** – an adjectival, substantive participle functioning as a noun – referring to Jesus Christ. This is quite clear, because the noun owns the cross (“his cross”). It is obviously Jesus Christ. (2) **Voice** – a *simple active* voice, indicating the subject (Jesus Christ) performed the action of the participle. (3) **Tense** – a *constative aorist*, describing a historical event in the past. (4) **Case** – the *subject nominative* of the sentence.

¹⁰³ The preposition διὰ is expressing *means*.

¹⁰⁴ τοῦ αἵματος is in the genitive case because it is the object of the preposition διὰ.

¹⁰⁵ αὐτοῦ: (1) **Case** – a *genitive of possession*, indicating that Jesus owns His cross.

¹⁰⁶ τοῦ σταυροῦ is a *genitive of reference*.

¹⁰⁷ The preposition δι' is expressing *means*.

¹⁰⁸ αὐτοῦ: (1) **Case** – the pronoun is in the genitive case because it is the object of the preposition διὰ. (2) **Antecedent** – Jesus Christ. (3) **Translation** – I took the pronoun to be reflexive, and Young cautioned that personal pronouns are sometimes used for this very purpose (*Intermediate Greek*, 75). It makes little grammatical sense to me to leave it as “Him.” Jesus is already the subject nominative of the sentence, so I believe the pronoun is referring back to Himself – Jesus made peace by means of Himself.

¹⁰⁹ The preposition ἐπὶ is expressing *space*.

¹¹⁰ τῆς γῆς is in the genitive case because it is the object of the preposition ἐπὶ.

¹¹¹ The preposition ἐν is expressing *space*.

¹¹² τοῖς οὐρανοῖς is in the dative case because it is the object of the preposition ἐν.