

Colossians, A Study pt.3

Colossians 1:1-2, Edited 3

This evening, we will continue in our demonstrative bible study.

Again, the reason for this is because we desire for you to know how to study the scriptures.

I thoroughly enjoy being able to cook and serve meals from the word, but I also want to take you into the kitchen, sort of speak, and show you have to prepare a meal.

We have been doing this study in the letter written to our brothers in Colossae.

(So, if you have your copy of God's word, turn with me to the epistle of Colossians. Remember, epistle is another word for letter.)

(READ CHAPTER 1)

The last three weeks we have been examining this gloriously rich greeting.

I would remind you that ALL scripture is profitable for teaching...(yes, this includes greetings and—as Pop has mentioned—even the genealogies.)

By way of review, when we come to New Testament letters, the greetings typically have three parts.

1. Introduction of the Author
2. The intended Audience
3. A Blessing Announced

We have already examined the first two parts of the greeting.

(Paul is the author)

(The church in Colossae is the audience)

We will now wrap up by looking at the third part of this greeting, which is the blessing (or salutation.)

Now, as we look at the blessing, almost all New Testament letters have them (especially the Pauline epistles—"Pauline epistle" is another way to say "Paul's

letter.”) I encourage you to never see the blessing (or salutation) as a general or random statement.

They are not just good sounding transitional statements!

Or some good sounding christian sentiment!

It is not like Paul didn't know what to write and come up with a sentence to fill the space!

This blessing is a deep theological statement!

A statement that should lift your heart to God in thanks and gratitude!

Here is the blessing:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father,

We see in this blessing that Paul identifies two blessings we receive from God.

“Grace and peace”

“Grace” is the unearned, unmerited favor of God.

“Grace” is being the recipient of God's lavish kindness.

“Grace” speaks of God's dealing with us according to the kind intention of His will!

In simple terms, grace is receiving from God what we do not deserve!

When God is gracious to us, He is dealing with us “not according to our sins.”

We deserve judgment and wrath!

We receive favor and kindness!

We deserve divine vengeance!

Yet, God has chosen to show and extend to us grace!

That's grace! It is God dealing with us favorably according to His will and not based on our works!

Paul also says we are recipients of peace.

This peace is an undisturbed rest in God that is based on the fact that you have a right standing with Him !

Peace is a settled assurance of calm, harmony (or even unity) between you and God!

Another way to say it is: Peace is the result of the hostility that existed between you and God being removed!

You have peace when the threat of wrath is removed!

This is why Paul, in Romans 5:1, “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...”

It is through Christ bearing our wrath, that we can receive peace with God!

Transition: As we press further into the text we see that we not only receive grace and peace, but we see *from whom* we receive it!

“Grace to you and peace *from God...*”

What this tells us is that this “grace and peace” is not something that is unfounded or random thing that is randomly deposited into your spiritual bank account.

Instead, this informs us that the grace and peace we receive is *sourced*.

In other words, the grace and peace we receive has its reality in God, and in God alone!

Think of it this way: How many gods are there? One.

Because there is only one, true and living God, He is the only one that can be gracious or give peace.

To say it another negatively: If God does not grant grace and peace, you will not have grace or peace.

There is no grace or peace outside of God!

So, when Paul says “*grace* to you and *peace* from God,” this is a clear indication that we have received something exclusive! (We have received something that *only* God can supply!)

In addition to this, it makes it abundantly clear that we receive this grace and peace according to God's good pleasure.

- It's not as if we strong-armed God into giving us grace and peace!
- We did not win a wrestling match with God and now He must give us grace and peace!
- It's not as if we have God in our debt and He must repay us with grace and peace!

We are not owed grace and peace!

When it comes to us with God, there is no such thing as “entitlement!”

As one brother so rightly puts it, “God is under no obligation to be gracious” [and we could say that God is under no obligation to give peace.]

There was nothing outside of God that motivated Him to give us grace and peace.

THINK ABOUT THIS: GOD DID NOT HAVE TO GIVE YOU GRACE OR PEACE!! (2X)

AND THIS THOUGHT SHOULD STAGGER YOU WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE SHEER AMOUNT OF GRACE AND PEACE GOD HAS GIVEN YOU!!

We have become so accustomed to receiving grace and peace that we often fail to remember and appreciate the fact that it did not have to be this way!

God could have chosen others to be recipients of this extravagant blessing!

Instead He chose you; He decided to set His grace and peace upon you!

What a profound reality!

Transition:

There is one more insight for us to consider concerning this greeting and that is how God is described.

He is described as, “**our Father.**”

“Grace to you and peace from God **our Father...**”

We receive all of this from God, who has covenantally bound Himself to be **our Father**, through faith in Christ!

God has pledged in His faithfulness to Jesus, to be to us our Father.

What this tells us is that there has been a fundamental change in the way we have come to relate to God!

- We do not relate to Him as sovereign judge or vengeful executioner!
- We do not relate to God as a disengaged, uninvolved dictator!
- We do not relate to God as a distant deity!

No, we relate to Him as our Father!

The God, who inhabits eternity, is our Father!

The God, who is incomprehensively and unfathomably holy, is to you a Father!

The God, to whom belongs heaven and earth, is to you your Father!

And this was the design and plan of God!

“**4** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. **6** And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

So, God sent forth His Son in order that we may become sons and daughters!

Jesus’ life, death and resurrection has secured for us an eternal adoption!

Now, because of Jesus, we cannot refer to God as anything other than Father!

And this Father has given to you, as a very present possession, **HIS GRACE AND HIS PEACE!!**

Be shocked and amazed!

Stand in awe and be overwhelmed by the sheer blessing of God that He poured out to you!

Now, did you notice what I did: I looked at the text, saw what was there, explained what was there, then I applied to us!

That's what you do in faithful bible study.

You are primarily asking three questions:

1. What does the text *say*?
2. What does the text *mean*?
3. How does the text *apply*?

And when you do that, you can glean some of the glory that we gleaned from the intro!!

SIDE NOTE:

Notice what I am doing. I am simply walking through the text.

I am looking at the words of the text in connection to the verse we are in and drawing out the meaning and implications of them.

Now, I do realize that there is a measure of the Spirit's gifting in me that enables me to do this the way He has allowed me to, but what I want you to see is that I am not doing anything fancy or sophisticated!

I want you to be encouraged that you can do this too! You, too, can come to the text and unearth God's glorious truths!

The same Spirit I have, you have too and if you will give yourself to studying scripture the way we have been demonstrating to you, the Spirit will lead into all truth.

Transition: Last week, I left something unclear.

Do you remember when we looked at Paul's statement in v. 1, "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God..." and I told you to be careful not to get distracted and start doing a bible study on the will of God?

Then I showed you that Paul used a similar phrase in 4:12, where he says, "**12** Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God."

And I told you that when we come this phrase we will have to do a study of the will of God.

What I feel like I left unclear is why?

Why do a study on the will of God in chapter 4 and why not for chapter 1?

The simple answer is authorial intent.

We have always ask the question, “What are the author's intentions in this text?”

If we ask that question of chapter 1, we would ask, “does Paul intend for me to study on the will of God or is he intending that I know that his calling into the apostleship was according to the will of God?”

I would argue Paul is simply informing us of his calling.

Now when asked that same question in chapter 4, I think we will get a different answer.

In Chapter 4, we ask, “does Paul intend for me to study the will of God or is he intending that I am simply informed about what Epaphras prayed for?”

It seems to me that Paul wants us to do a study on the will of God, because Epaphras’ prayer wanted the saints of that time to be assured of the will of God (which means that it was something that they could know!)

So, we will do a study on the will of God in chapter 4 because it seems that Paul's intention is that we know something of the will of God.

Does that make sense?

So, ultimately context will determine when and why we will do a study on a phrase.

In the time we have left, I am going to show you one way to learn the meaning of words.

Trust me, this is not beyond your ability to do.

It is simple, but will require you to learn something new if you are not used to dealing with technology.

And if you do not want to deal with technology, I have some books for you to purchase (all this info will be in the notes that will be posted on the website.)

USING A WEBSITE:

There are many websites to use, but a simple one, for now, is Bible Gateway.com

1. Go to the website
2. Choose your translation
3. Type in your passage
4. Right above your passage, to the right, is a symbol that looks like two papers.
5. Click that and another translation of the scripture should appear
6. (When the translation appears), choose “Mounce Interlinear New Testament”.
7. When you do this, you will see the English on the top and Greek on the bottom. That’s ok, you do not need to know Greek. Find the English word and it will highlight the Greek.
8. Click the highlighted word and it will give you the definition.

That is the most basic way of doing word study online.

(There are other ways and there are other websites, but this is the most basic way.)

A Biblical Dictionary you can buy is:

Mounce’s Biblical Dictionary

<https://www.amazon.com/Mounces-Complete-Expository-Dictionary-Testament/dp/0310248787>