

Grace and Peace

Jan. 1, 2023

Paul opens every one of his letters in the same way, “grace and peace to you from God.” In doing so, he combines the common Greek (Gentile) word of welcome, *charis* - grace, with the common Hebrew (Jewish) word of welcome, *shalom* - peace. From the beginning of each letter Paul seeks to unite the people with their common greeting, but he adds the new Christian perspective. This grace and favor, this peace that you extend to one another, it ultimately comes from God the Father and his son, the Lord Jesus Christ. *“To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 1:7)*

Beyond the Typical Greeting...

- Grace and peace to you is much more than the kind, well-wishes, of man. These gifts are in **our possession**.
- “grace and peace **to** you” - Paul implies that **more** is **coming**.
- Peter makes it clear - “May grace and peace be **multiplied** to you” - 1 Peter 1:2
- Grace and peace are multiplied in the **knowledge** of **God** and **Jesus**.

The Grace of God

- Grace is **unmerited favor**.
- Grace is also **God's power** working within us.
- The gift of grace is for more than **salvation** - grace is also for **transformation**.
- Grace doesn't just save us; it **sustains** us.

The Peace of God

- Worldly peace is all about **compromise**.
- The peace of God is not just the absence of **conflict** and it never involves **compromise**.
- God's peace is lasting because he solves conflict at the source - **our sin**.
- **Grace** always comes before **peace**.

Opening the Gift

- The **pursuit** of God the father and Christ the son is how you **accept** the gift.
- Grace and peace are **multiplied** to you and you will never reach their **limit**.

Every one of Paul's letters begins with grace and peace to you. As Paul wraps up each letter, one small thing changes. Paul ends his letters with some form of this phrase, “grace be with you.” Not **to** you anymore... Grace be **with** you. The gifts of grace and peace are not just for you and your relationship with God. The grace and peace of God should permeate every relationship you have.