



RESURRECTION CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

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EVANGELIZING THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER

Letters of Faith

August 2009

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Corinthians 1:3

Dearly Beloved,

We have been particularly noticing lately the apostle Paul’s consistent use of the phrase “...**grace and peace to you...**” when addressing his letters to the young churches of his founding. We get the sense that he was actually transmitting grace and peace to them directly from Father God and the Lord Jesus. He also included the word “grace” in his salutations to his beloved flock, so we cannot miss the fact that administering God’s grace and peace to God’s kids was very high on Paul’s priority list.

What sticks in our heart about this as we read our New American Standard Bible is that Paul was so often actually *imparting* God’s grace and peace (14 times out of 24 times he uses this expression), not just *imploring* God’s grace and peace to be released to them, and 12 of these impartations of grace and peace were in his opening words of greeting. The only way he could do that without being totally presumptuous was to have been in the presence of Jesus and the Father while they were empowering him with their grace and peace and instructing him to release grace and peace to all of his disciples.

As we look at the 34 times these words appear in the opening and closing verses of all the Epistles, it becomes very apparent that grace and peace are paramount facets of the victorious Christian life that these disciples of God wanted us all to walk in. But the grace of God they were imparting is more than the familiar Sunday School expression of “**God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense.**”

God’s grace is God *in you* being God *through you!*

Grace is “favor and spiritual blessing” (ref. the Amplified Bible), and is manifested by the “gifts” of the Holy Spirit, or the charismata (“gracelets”) of the Holy Spirit, which are the supernatural powers of God—the operational power of the Holy Spirit of God—working through you. The apostle Paul operated in the “power-grace” of God and continuously exhorted the Church to follow his example.

The world considers peace to be the absence of turmoil. But peace in the Kingdom of God is much more than the absence of turmoil. It is *calm and overriding confidence* in the very midst of turmoil. It is faith in the Prince of Peace when the world and the worldly have no peace.

But that isn’t all that is involved with God’s peace. Romans 16:20 puts an additional aggressive dimension to peace: “**The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.**” (NLT) The grace of God will be with you while the God of peace crushes Satan under your feet. That’s the peace that surpasses human understanding—grace and peace in the midst of God’s crushings!

Can you see why Paul sensed the need to impart those kinds of grace and peace to the Body of Christ? Can you see why Jesus is saying to all of us right now to stand firm in, and to impart to each other, those kinds of supernatural grace and peace?

Jesus wants us all to walk in, and to share, the peace that comes only from Him and our Father as we fellowship with them: “**Be anxious for nothing**, [that’s real peace] **but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving** [that takes God’s grace to be real and effective] **let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**” (Phil. 4:6-7 NASB)

We see in this final phrase of Phil. 4:7 that although God’s peace is not even understandable by our cognitive processes, it is able to guard, protect, and police both our emotions and our thoughts as they

are set on our Lord Christ Jesus so that anxiety has no openings to attack our peace.

The apostle Peter further emphasizes that grace and peace are developed through increased knowledge of the Prince of Peace: **“Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord...”** (2 Pet. 1:2 NASB) And Paul further declares in Rom. 14:17-18 that this peace of God is a key component of walking in the Kingdom: **“...for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who in this way serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.”**

It is also very interesting to notice that the New Living Translation translates all but one of these same phrases for *grace and peace* in the passive or *imploring* voice—the single exception being Revelation 1:4-5: **“This letter is from John to the seven churches in the province of Asia. Grace and peace from the one who is, who always was, and who is still to come; from the sevenfold Spirit before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness to these things, the first to rise from the dead, and the commander of all the rulers of the world.”** This proclamation from John also appears in the New American Standard Bible as an impartation to the churches of the grace and peace he was receiving from his Lord and Heavenly Father.

So we conclude that God wants us to minister His grace and peace to each other in these perilous times—both by proclamation (imparting) and by prayer (imploring). **“My purpose in writing is to encourage you and assure you that the grace of God is with you no matter what happens.”** (1 Peter 5:12 NLT) **“May grace, mercy, and peace, which come from God our Father and from Jesus Christ his Son, be with us who live in truth and love.”** (2 John 1:3 NLT)

Huge Hugs of grace and peace,



MINISTRY REPORT:

Thanks to all of you who have responded so positively to our last few Letters of Faith. We are grateful to hear from you and are delighted to know that what we are hearing and proclaiming is also what you are hearing from God in your prayer closets!

Sometimes we just don't have space to include everything that is important to say on any given subject, so we want to share with you some excerpts from one reader's comments about our June LOF that complement our discussion of discerning and dealing with what we referred to as the deception of the false believer. Please take these comments to heart as you proceed to walk in love during these very trying times!

“One thought I had re. your June letter, not in any way disagreeing with you, rather just flowing out of what you shared. God has highlighted Eph. 6:12 for me about our struggle not being against flesh and blood. I feel we need to see the enemy as being utterly evil. But we [also] should regard fellow human beings as made in the image of God ... Rather than discerning whether an individual is good or bad, I feel we need to discern when the enemy is at work through what someone is doing or saying. We can love the individual but hate the work of the enemy ... In many ways, the religious person who believes they are doing the right thing can be more lethal than someone who is deliberately seeking to cause harm.” [Thank you, Jeremy!]

That is a much needed reminder to all of us to *“hate the sin, but love the sinner”* whether it be in church matters, family relations, or politics. So let's always keep in our hearts, our thoughts, and our actions this powerful word: **“Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.”** (Eph. 3:20-21 NASB)