



RESURRECTION CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

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EVANGELIZING THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER

Letters of Faith

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“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.”
2 Corinthians 12:9 NASB

Dearly Beloved,

Have you ever really pondered the Apostle Paul’s greetings and salutations in his mighty epistles? They start with his declaring grace and peace directly from God to the saints, and end with his own personal grace blessing.

The only way he could honestly declare grace on behalf of God this boldly is to have been in His presence and received instructions from Him to declare His grace and peace to His children. Let me show you what I mean by recapping all of Paul’s greetings and salutations. Please read them thoughtfully to receive the full impact of what Paul was trying to impart from God and from his own heart. Remember, Jewish writings made great emphasis on a point of vital importance by repetition.

Paul’s greetings of grace declared by God through him:

“...Grace to you and peace *from* God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (basic form in almost all epistles except 1 Thes. – emphasis on *from* is added).

“...Grace to you and peace.” (1 Thes. 1:1)

Paul’s personal individualized salutations of grace:

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.” (Rom. 16:24)

“The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.” (1 Cor. 1 & 2 Thes.)

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.” (2 Cor.)

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit...” (Gal., Phil., and Philem.)

“Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible love.”
(Eph.)

“...Grace be with you.” (Col., 1 & 2 Tim. and Titus)

Beloved, the Apostle Paul boldly declared God’s grace directly from God the Father in addressing God’s people, and he ended all of his anointed missives with his own heartfelt impartation of grace. Peter did much the same. John was even more effusive. He opens Revelation with an awesome declaration of grace *from* **“...Him who is and who was and who is to come, and *from* the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and *from* Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood — and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father — to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”** (Rev.1:4-6) Then John ends this most amazing of all

the epistles with his own assurance of God's grace being with all the saints — implying, I think, 'like He has been with me in person on this forbidding island prison.' (See Rev. 22:21)

So what is this "grace" that the apostles transmitted directly to God's people from being with Him in prayer and praise? It surely is more than the Sunday school expression of "God's Riches At Christ's Expense."

The book of Acts shows us that this "grace," so important to God and to His disciples, can better be expressed as "The enabling power of the Holy Spirit." All of the uses of the word "grace" in the book of Acts relate to the demonstration of signs and wonders, to the building up and encouraging of the church, and to the imparting of courage and the power to remain true to the Lord in the face of horrific opposition.

Stephen was a deacon, selected by the Apostles to be a table waiter, but he was: **"...full of grace... performing great wonders and signs among the people."** (Acts 6:8) I do not think anyone would have said: 'Stephen, full of God's riches at Christ's expense!' Stephen was being defined as a man ministering miraculously in the power of the Holy Spirit! The anointing and power of his Holy Spirit testimony before the religious authorities made them grind their teeth in anger, and rush to stone him to death as a mad heretic.

Paul witnessed the grace of God in Stephen as he was "rocked to sleep" in Jesus. This so affected Paul that when he addressed the elders at Ephesus on his final trip back to Jerusalem, he declared: **"...in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God."** (Acts 20:24)

Beloved, I am spiritually exercised by the word "grace" because right now I need all I can receive of this power kind of grace from the Lord, and I sense that each of you in the Body of Christ is in the same spiritual spot in many aspects of your life as we see almost everything we hold sacrosanct being devastated.

I have just brought Gretel to a wonderful Alzheimer's facility that will love and care for her until she catches her whirlwind into Jesus' presence forever. She needs more care than Alexis and Mark and the wonderful caregivers God brought them could possibly provide. She is at a wonderful peace with this new existence (that's grace), constantly exhibits the reign of God's Holy Spirit in her by glowing and being sweet (that's grace), and participates to the extent of her remaining abilities (that's truly His great grace in action). The head nurse (not a charismatic Christian) told Alexis that she heard Gretel praying in tongues. She said: "Though I do not do that, it was the most beautiful and melodious prayer I've ever heard." She then added that the first time they had a sing-along, Gretel not only sang but danced! By God's grace, Gretel's spirit is joyful and at peace in her new home away from home.

Another of the nurse caregivers at Barathaven told Alexis that the first night Gretel was there, her roommate slept all through the night for the first time. That, Beloved, is contagious grace! That is the evidence of being filled, immersed in, and totally yielded to, possessed by, and effervescing the Holy Spirit.

I also need great grace because being separated from my love partner of 60 years (this last month) is the most challenging thing I have ever faced, and the only way I can deal with it is by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit in me to keep the lump out of my throat and tears from squirting at every thought of my precious Gretel!

Yes, Beloved, Gretel and I, in entirely different dimensions, are experiencing the powerful truth that God's grace IS sufficient! So take comfort: whatever you are facing or whatever is confronting you onerously, or might even be challenging your basic beliefs and faith itself, you *can overcome with God's grace* — His enabling power of His mighty Holy Spirit. **"...for He [God] Himself has said, I will not in any way fail you nor give you up nor leave you without support. [I will] not, [I will] not, [I will] not in any degree leave you helpless nor forsake nor let [you] down (relax My hold on you)! [Assuredly not!] So we take comfort and are encouraged and confidently and boldly say, The Lord is my helper; I will not be seized with alarm [I will not fear or dread or be terrified]"** (Heb. 13:5-6 AMP)

In plain and simple English, we have a God who can be trusted with overseeing our lives. Nothing can happen to us that is so devastating or evil that it can ever go beyond God's ability to re-fashion, reshape, recycle, redirect, or redeem it and our lives for His Godly purposes! Gretel and I are going through some "final polishing" of our spirits and souls — as probably most of you are also — but God's grace IS sufficient to bring us through it in such a way as to bring Him glory for all to see and desire to emulate.

So we pray that you will take to heart this Paul's (my) impartation of the full portion of God's grace and peace. I believe this is a vital key to being transformed into His image, so that when we see Him face-to-face, there won't have to be a cataclysmic change in us in order to be like Him.

Grace is how we appropriate the glorious and grace-filled words of Paul to the Corinthians: **"I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."** (1 Cor. 1:4-8)

Grace-filled Hugs,



Paul & Gretel