

EPHESIANS 1:2c
Introduction Of The Letter: Cont'd
Message 6, Nov. 22, 1998

INTRO: My wife's parents were visiting someone in a care home for the elderly. The man they were visiting had his dinner tray in front of him. Another elderly man whose mental capacities were beginning to fail him, wheeled into the room in his wheelchair, thinking this must be a restaurant, and wanted to order a meal. We smile, realizing that not everything is in order the way it used to be. But many, who have all their mental capacities about them go to the wrong place to find help or comfort when they are in need. In the search for help or peace of mind they will go to some strange places to seek help.

When I was about 10-12 years old we had a man who worked in my dad's sawmill. He was a German man who spoke the same language we spoke and grew up in the same church. As a matter of fact, his parents lived right close to the country church we drove ten miles to go to.

Well, this man worked in my dad's sawmill. Gang edgers were the new and big thing. You could slab a log and put the cant through an edger and make a number of boards just with one pass. When these edgers first came out they were killers. If a cant was timberbound or a thin slab wedged into the sawcut the whole cant would often come shooting out of the back of the edger. Well, the WCB, after a number of injuries and deaths required that one make kickbacks on the edger. Kickbacks were metal teeth that allowed a cant to go forward but not backward. As soon as a cant was pushed backward the kickback teeth would bite into the wood and stop it. But, if a cant had passed through the kickbacks and if it then kicked back it could come right past the kickbacks. So later the WCB required a stopper bar to be placed behind the kickbacks to prevent this danger as well. Well, my dad placed the kickbacks on the edger and this man I am telling you about had the job of edging.

One day, a timberbound cant had passed through the kickbacks and then was grabbed by the edging saws and shot back. One 2x4 caught him in the hip, breaking his leg off and another split his head open. He was taken out of the rough sawmill road to the hospital some 20 miles away. For days this man hung on to life. Sometimes things looked better, sometimes worse. During those days the families

sought for peace of mind. What would they not have given for grace to carry them through, and for even a bit of peace of mind. But day by day, they would go to the liquor store and then seek to bring peace to their troubled and tempestuous minds.

Some people seek peace by getting away from everything. We go to various places and to great lengths to find grace to help in time of need or peace for a troubled mind. Yet when a senile senior pilots his wheelchair into care home room to order a meal we smile. Now I want you to look at our text again. "Grace to you and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." You see, there is the source of grace and peace. There is the place you go.

Maybe you are here this morning. Maybe you are in need of grace to help in time of need. Maybe your heart longs for peace, sweet blissful peace. Maybe you have gone many places but all to no avail. Our Scripture this morning gives us the source of grace and peace. And so we want to consider the twofold source of grace and peace.

c. The twofold source

1) From God our Father

The first source of grace and peace mentioned is God our Father. Now there is wonder and warmth in those words! Now I am told that some, when you mention the idea of God as Father, they are terrified. That is because their earthly father was a drunk or abusive or such like. For those with such a problem you have to reprogram your mind until the words, "God our Father" bring warmth and Biblical meaning. In Ephesians we are going to learn a great deal about God.

Now, if we said grace and peace come from God the warmth of the passage would be lost. You see Paul does not say grace and peace come from God, but from God our Father. And while we are on that topic you must realize this morning that God is not the Father of all mankind. He is the creator of all but not the Father of all.

Jesus said in John 8 to certain of the Jews, "You are of your father the devil." The unsaved cannot truly pray, "Our father which art in heaven..." I was in Spy Hill prison on one occasion and was leading the Bible study. As was the usual I pointed out that there are only two ways and all are on one or the other of those two ways. One of the natives sitting behind me to my left was not too happy about the whole thing. Apparently he believed in the brotherhood of man. That means that if there is a God He is the father of all. When the study was done he tapped me on my left shoulder and in a rather menacing voice he said, "Hey, are you my brother?" There were mostly natives in the room and the mood was tense. I said to him, "Are you a Christian?" Without hesitation he said, "No!" I said, "Well, then you are not my brother."

You see, this text limits to whom the words "our father" can refer. Look at verse 1, "Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and faithful in Christ Jesus, grace to you and peace from God our Father..." When Paul speaks of God our Father, the possessive pronoun *our* refers to Christians.

Now consider again the fact that grace and peace come from God our father. There is a relationship between father and child that is different from any other relationship. Look at this difference in Luke 11:11-13 and Luke 15:11-24.

Now look at Ephesians 1:2 again. It does not say, Grace and peace to you from God. It says, grace to you and peace from God, *our Father*. That makes all the difference! Do you think God our Father will turn away from us when we ask Him for grace and peace? Some time ago we had one of the men leading the singing here and from toward

the back I heard the little voice, "That's my daddy, that's my daddy!" You see, it makes a big difference when its *my* daddy. I wonder this morning if you have found God as your Father? Consider the attributes of God this morning. He is love. He is good, kind, gracious, just, faithful. He is true. Then think of Him as your Father. You don't have to make believe. It is true! If you are a Christian He is your Father. And now remember that grace and peace come from God your Father.

In Ephesians 1:3-14 we are going to get to know God our Father better. We will see Him at work for us. We will see some of what He has for us and also of what He desires from us.

I looked for an illustration I had read but I could not find it. I trust I can give you the general thought of this little story. Some boys were out by the seashore and a ship was going by. One of the boys waved frantically, trying to stop the ship. The other boys ridiculed this boys effort to stop the ship. And then, to their surprise, the ship stopped and a skiff was lowered and the boy was taken up into the ship. You see, the captain of that ship was the boys father. When the one you are appealing to is your father, it simply makes a big difference. Look again at these words, "Grace to you and peace from God our Father." I wonder, have you ever come to appreciate God as Your Father? He is, you know, if you are a Christian.

2) From the Lord Jesus Christ

If in the words, "God our Father" we get a sense of warmth, in the words, "Lord Jesus Christ" we get a sense of authority. You see, it does not say that grace and peace come from Jesus, or from Christ, or from

the Lord, or from the Son of God, or from Jesus Christ our Lord. No. It says grace and peace come from the Lord Jesus Christ.

We have stress here on the word Lord because it comes first. Let me remind you of something in Philippians 2:9-11. You see, this passage tells us that God has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name. We sing, "Jesus, name above all names..." But I do not think we are theologically correct. The sense of those words is OK but Jesus is not the name above all names. The name which is above all names is the name that was too holy for the Jews to pronounce.

When I learned Hebrew grammar I had to learn a very important and interesting Jewish grammatical principle. It is called Kethibh and Qere. If a mistake somehow entered the text of Scripture, even if it were obviously a mistake, it would never be changed. Each scribe would recopy the mistake. When a mistake was recopied it was called Kethibh. Kethibh means, "It is written." What was written was written. It could never be changed except by accident. However, the correct writing was placed in the margin and was called Qere which means "to be read." So the text that was actually to be read was in the margin. There was one name in the Old Testament the Jew always wrote Kethibh and always read Qere. It is the name Jehovah or Yaweh. The name Jehovah was written in such a way that it could not be read and was written in the margin as Adonai. The Jew would NEVER EVER pronounce the name Jehovah because it was so sacred. It was the name above all names. (Read Ex. 3:13-15).

So grace and peace comes to us from the authority of all authorities, the LORD. But there is another name to consider. It comes from the LORD who is Jesus Christ.

There is something very interesting here in the name Jesus. Here we meet the humanity of the Lord. You see, the Lord Jesus Christ was as fully man as He was God. That makes a great difference. When Jesus was born as a man he was placed under many restrictions and He became one of us. He got hungry and tired. He ate and walked and He wept. Turn to Hebrews 4:14-16 and see how this part of our Lord connects to our need of grace.

In the name Jesus, we do not only see His humanity. The name Jesus means Jehovah our Saviour. Since Jesus is part of the name of the One who is the source of grace and peace, would He shed His blood for us as our Saviour from sin and then not desire to give us grace to overcome sin and peace from our war against sin? Of course He would. He wants to give us victory!

But let's consider the last part of His name as given in this passage. Grace and peace come to us from God our Father and from the Lord, the authority above all authorities, Jesus, the man above all men, and Christ. What is significant about this name in this text? Well, the name Christ means the anointed one. This refers to the Messiah, the King of the Jews. Now consider for a moment Luke 4:14-19. He is the Christ, the anointed One because He came to preach the Gospel to the poor, because He was sent to heal the brokenhearted, because He was to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind and to set at liberty those who are oppressed and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

Surely a preacher who preaches like that knows about the need for grace and peace? Every line in that prophecy speaks of the friction in the souls of men and the need for help. And surely a preacher like that who also is the source of grace and peace

will give it when the poor, the
brokenhearted, the blind, the captive and
the oppressed respond to His message.

CONCL: How significant are these words which reveal to us the source of grace and peace? Grace and peace come from "God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." I tell you, there is no power in heaven and on earth that can stop you from experiencing total victory in your life! There is only one thing I know that can keep us from experiencing grace and peace. It is my own will. God will never violate man's free will. He will allow murder and every kind of evil and sin sooner than violate man's free will. I must want grace and peace and I must meet the conditions for them.

Will our Father in heaven not give us grace when we ask and will He not give us peace when we ask? He wants to and He will if we but meet the conditions set out in Scripture.