

Ephesians 1vs 1-2 Part 2 Grace and Peace to the Saints.

to the saints who are in Ephesus, even those who believe in Christ Jesus

Paul is writing to the Saints at Ephesus. The word saints, *hagios áγιοις* means holy one, means something that is pure, consecrated, set apart to God, consecrated, sanctified. Paul refers to the saints as [2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to] **those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:** (1 Cor 1:2)

We are saints because we are called by God, and sanctified, set apart for use, in Christ. Not only God's people, but God's holy, righteous people, set apart by the Holy Spirit to manifest Jesus' character, and show the world what He is like. This makes sense if we are as 2 Peter 2:4-5 says **4 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by people, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.** And, of course that means that we have to, as 2nd Peter 2 starts **Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander,** The call is to allow God to sanctify us by cooperating with His Holy Spirit in ridding ourselves of such things. Because we are saints, we carry the name of Christ. How we act is how the world supposes that Christ acts. So we must strive to be like Him, so that He isn't given a bad name among the unbelievers. Eph 5:1-3 **Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. 3 But sexual immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be mentioned among you, as is proper among saints;** It's not that we're righteous ourselves, so God calls us Saints, it's that God has called us and enabled us to be Saints, and so we can be righteous. We have obtained this position because we have appropriated Christ's work to our lives. It's not because of us, it's because of the change that Jesus has made in us. Paul's address to the saints at Ephesus emphasizes to the church, that despite their struggles and their persecution, and the spiritual warfare that they are under, they must remember, as we all must, that we're all in this together.

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

Paul's greeting is simple but profound. 2 greetings: grace and peace. And this pair of greetings is what we find over and over again from Paul in his letters. Typically, Greek letters would open with the word rejoice, *chairein*, "be well". Here's a marvelous example of Paul taking a common greeting of the day, and "turning it into gospel". Paul changes the typical traditional greeting *chairein* to *Charis* or Grace, introducing the Gospel right up front in the book. Paul immediately calls to mind God's unmerited or undeserved favor in providing salvation for sinners through Christ's sacrificial death on the cross. Eph 2:8 **8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;** The word grace appears 155 times in the New Testament, but it's not just an introductory obligatory statement—it is the Gospel in one word: Grace.

Paul then adds the traditional Jewish greeting of *shalom* or Peace in the sense of wholeness or well-being. It appears in the Septuagint (LXX) 290 times and almost always translates the Hebrew word *Shalom* שָׁלוֹם; the common greeting. Although we usually think of it as meaning "peace" the word *Shalom* has the idea of wellbeing from ancient times. To make it clear, in Jer 29:11 **For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for prosperity and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.** When it is translated "plans to prosper you, or plans for prosperity" what it actually says is that God's plans for us are *Shalom*. Peace, completeness, soundness, welfare, peace, safety, soundness in body and mind, welfare in every aspect, health, prosperity, quiet tranquility, contentment, harmonious relationship. The Greek word *eirene* in our verse today most directly means harmonious peace with God, and with our brothers and sisters in Christ. It's used eight times in Ephesians.

from God our Father and Lord Jesus Christ

Paul says that grace and peace are from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. They are the source. God is our heavenly Father, and Jesus has revealed Him to us as such. Jesus in the New Testament has

revealed that we can have a much closer relationship with God as our Father through Jesus. Because we know the Son, who taught us to address our prayers to “Our Father who is in heaven” (Matt 6:9). We find this all over the New Testament, where God is called our Father over 260 times, compared to just 15 times in the entire Old Testament. We have access to God in an intimate way, only dreamed about by the Old Testament saints. Through Jesus, who has made the atoning sacrifice for our sin on the cross, we have been justified, and are able to approach God. In fact, Jesus taught us not only to call God “our Father”, but to approach the God of the Universe with the intimacy and familiarity of a little child going to their daddy, crying Abba, “my father” (Mark 14:36), daddy, depending on Him, but never losing the respect for Him as God. Paul understood that we have been adopted as sons, and could call God, “Abba, Father as well, since we are truly sons and daughters of God our Father. Rom 8:15-16 **15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery [k]leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons and daughters by which we cry out, “Abba! [m]Father!” 16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,** It is because of our position as Sons, that He has gifted us the presence of the Holy Spirit, to make sure that His Sons come home at the end of the day.

When the Church was born, on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit made sure that Peter let everyone know that Jesus had always been Lord, one with God, as Had been revealed by King David and others. In Acts 2 **31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. 32 It is this Jesus whom God raised up, a fact to which we are all witnesses. 33 Therefore, since He has been exalted at the right hand of God, and has received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this which you both see and hear. 34 For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, 35 Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”’ 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.”** The word Lord, κύριος, Kurios, means one “having power, authority,”. Jesus is Lord of All; and someone has wisely said if Jesus is not Lord of All in your life, He is not Lord at all, and you’d better check your salvation—whether you’re really believing in the real Jesus of scripture, or if you’re still on the throne of your life. Someone will be on the throne, and it had better be Jesus—no other substitute will do. Acts 4:12 **12 And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among mankind by which we must be saved.”** Paul wants to make sure that we know up front who the real Lord is! So, is Jesus your Lord? Make Him your Lord, and you will know the Grace and Peace from God the Father through Jesus Christ His Son.