

Grace and Peace from God our Father

Grace to you and peace from God our Father! This greeting of Paul to the Colossians is similar to the greetings in his other epistles. In this epistle Paul formally introduced himself to the Colossians. He had never visited Colossae, and he had most likely never met most of the Christians there.

Nevertheless, he could write to them, and they, together with believers of every generation to come, should receive his message with respect because of his calling. Paul was an apostle, an official spokesman for the Lord Jesus. Paul had received his apostolic office because the Lord Himself had called Paul to it. He was writing to the Colossians in his official capacity as an apostle, an ambassador of the Lord. Through Paul, the Lord Himself was addressing the Colossians in this inspired epistle and still addresses us.

Timothy was in Rome with Paul when the apostle wrote this letter. Paul, Timothy, and the Colossians enjoyed a close, brotherly relationship, even if they had never personally met. By virtue of their common faith, they belonged to the same spiritual family. Paul's epistle, though apostolic in its authority, is going to be brotherly in spirit.

The addressees of the letter are "*the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae.*" The ones who are *holy* (saints) are those who have been set apart from the world by the Lord to serve and glorify Him. The Colossian Christians and all who believe in Jesus are holy ones. The members of the congregation at Colossae had been faithful to the Lord Jesus until the time Paul wrote to them. The purpose of this letter was to encourage them in that faithfulness. Although it was to be shared with the believers in Laodicea, and eventually with every Christian congregation of the New Testament age, this epistle was specifically directed to the congregation at Colossae and to the struggles and troubles it faced.

With those two words that mean so much to every Christian, Paul lovingly greets those whom he regards as brothers and sisters in Christ: "*Grace and peace to you.*" "Grace" is God's unmerited love for sinners, love that He demonstrated in the redemptive work of Jesus. "Peace" is that peace of heart and conscience that results from the assurance God gives to believers that ALL their sins are forgiven and He is at peace with them.

No greater blessings can be pronounced on anyone than the blessings of grace and peace from our God and Father!