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The Salutation



Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (1:1-2)

In his salutation, Paul presents the dual source of his apostolic authority, a dual description of believers, a dual blessing for believers, and the dual source of those blessings.

THE DUAL SOURCE OF AUTHORITY

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, (1:1a)

Paul wrote with the authority of an apostle. *Apostolos* means “sent one” and in the New Testament is used as an official title of the men God uniquely chose to be the foundation layers of the church and the receivers, teachers, and writers of His final revelation—the New Testament. The apostolic duties were to preach the gospel (1 Cor. 1:17), teach and pray (Acts 6:4), work miracles (2 Cor. 12:12), build up other leaders of the church (Acts 14:23), and write the Word of God (Eph. 1:1; etc.).

Besides the original twelve and Matthias (Acts 1:26), who replaced Judas, Paul was the only other **apostle**, “as it were . . . one untimely born” (1 Cor. 15:8). Yet he was not inferior to the other apostles, having met all the requirements for that office (1 Cor. 9:1).

Paul’s credentials were not his academic training or his rabbinical leadership but his being an **apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God**. Paul did not teach and write by his own authority but by the dual yet totally unified authority of the Son (**Christ Jesus**) and of the Father (**God**). In stating that truth Paul was not boasting of personal merit or elevating himself above other believers. He well remembered that he had been a blasphemer, a violent persecutor of the church, and an unworthy and ignorant unbeliever; and he still considered himself the foremost of sinners (1 Tim. 1:13, 15). Like every Christian, he was first of all “a bond-servant of Christ Jesus” his Lord (Rom. 1:1). By mentioning his apostleship, Paul simply established his undeserved but divinely-bestowed authority to speak in God’s behalf—which he states at the beginning of each of his epistles except Philipppians and 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

THE DUAL DESIGNATION OF BELIEVERS

to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus: (1:1b)

From God’s side believers are those whom He has made holy, which is the meaning of **saints**. From man’s side believers are those who are **faithful**, those who have trusted in **Christ Jesus** as their Lord and Savior.

Every Christian is a saint, because every Christian has been set apart and made holy through the perfect righteousness of Christ that has been placed to his account (Rom. 3:21-22; 1 Cor. 1:30; Phil. 3:9; etc.). When a person acts in faith to receive Christ, God acts in grace to give that person Christ’s own righteousness. It is Christ’s perfect righteousness—not a person’s own character or accomplishments, no matter how great they may seem in men’s eyes—that establishes *every* believer as one of God’s **saints** through saving faith.

THE DUAL BLESSINGS OF BELIEVERS

Grace to you and peace (1:2a)

This was a common greeting among Christians in the early church. *Charis* (**grace**) is God’s great kindness toward those who are undeserving of His favor but who have placed their faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. To greet a Christian brother or sister in this way is much more than a wish for their general well-being. It is also an acknowledgment of the divine grace in which we stand and which has made us mutual members of Christ’s Body and of God’s divine family.

Grace is the fountain of which **peace** (*eirēnē*) is the stream. Because we

have grace from God we have peace *with* God and the peace *of* God, “which surpasses all comprehension” (Phil. 4:7). **Peace** is the equivalent of the Hebrew *shālôm*, which, in its highest connotation, signifies spiritual prosperity and completeness.

THE DUAL SOURCE OF BLESSING

from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (1:2b)

The dual source of blessing is the same as the dual source of authority—**God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**. Those are not separate and distinct sources but two manifestations of the same Source, as indicated by the connective *kai* (**and**), which can indicate equivalence, and here indicates that the **Lord Jesus Christ** is deity just like **God our Father**.

Paul’s message throughout this epistle is that believers might understand and experience more fully all of the blessings granted by their heavenly Father and His Son and their Savior, Jesus Christ.