

Sunday, May 17, 2015—I Corinthians 1:2-3: Grace Be Unto You and Peace

Introduction

- In the previous study we finished looking at I Cor. 1:1 and covered the first half of verse 2. In studying the first half of verse 2 we touched upon the believer's sanctified position in Jesus Christ. We saw that "sanctification" means to be separate, or to be set apart as holy unto God. In doing so we touched upon the following three types of sanctification:
 - Positional Sanctification—believers Stand "In Christ" complete! (Past)
 - Practical Sanctification—the state or condition of the believers Christian walk. (Present)
 - Ultimate Sanctification—when we will once and for all time be set apart from this world and the sin that resides in our flesh. (Future)
- Furthermore, we saw that the Corinthians were "called to be saints," i.e., persons sanctified, according to *Webster's 1828 Dictionary*. The Greek word *hagios* translated "saints" means "most holy thing" and is the same word used to refer to Jesus Christ as he was conceived of the Holy Spirit and developed within Mary's womb in Luke 1:35 ("holy thing").
- The Bible declares all who have trusted in the blood of Christ for their salvation to be "saints." In fact, the Corinthians were the least likely people in the world to be called "saints" that Paul ever wrote to.
 - We as believers belong to God NOW! Therefore we ought to live for Him TODAY and every day the Lord gives us.
- This morning we want to finish our consideration of verse 2 as well as cover verse 3.

I Corinthians 1:2b

- **Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:**
- "*with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord,*"—so far we have seen in from verses 1 and 2 that Paul along with Sosthenes (verse 1) are writing to "the church of God which is at Corinth" (verse 2).
- The second half of verse 2 seems to extend Paul's intended audience beyond just the believers in Corinth. The phrase "call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord" is in the present tense and denotes believers beyond the Corinthian church.

- II Timothy 2:22—“with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”
- Even though Paul’s primary audience was the Corinthian church, in a secondary sense, the letter was written to all the members of the body of Christ, i.e., “all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.”
- *Both theirs and ours*—is a strange phrase that is virtually passed over in most of the commentaries I looked at. When it was not simply passed over, most commentators sought to connect Paul’s statement with Peter’s converts and the Little Flock, i.e., the Jewish kingdom church of early Acts.
- Given the fact, that this is the second verse of the book one does not have much context to work with in terms of figuring out what Paul means by the phrase “both theirs and ours.” Let’s start with the possessive pronoun “ours,” in the context this word must refer to Paul and Sosthenes from verse 1.
 - I Corinthians 9:1—the Corinthians were Paul’s work in the Lord.
- So the “ours” portion of the expression seems to refer to the believers in Corinth who got saved via Paul’s labor among them. Meanwhile, the “theirs” part of the expression would most logically refer to “with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord” portion of verse 2. It seems that these would be saints who came to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ through the evangelistic efforts of someone other than Paul.
- By the time Paul writes I Corinthians in Acts 19 local churches had already been established in other regions. If these churches were following Paul’s ministry pattern they would have been preaching Paul’s gospel and possibly even seeking to establish new communities of believers, i.e., local churches.
- Just judging from the text, I see no reason to think that Paul has the Little Flock in mind specifically at the end of verse 2.

I Corinthians 1:3

- **Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.**
- Paul begins every one of his letters with a similar statement about “grace” and “peace”
 - Romans 1:7
 - II Corinthians 1:2
 - Galatians 1:3
 - Ephesians 1:2
 - Philippians 1:2
 - Colossians 1:2

- I Thessalonians 1:1
 - II Thessalonians 1:2
- In the Pastoral Epistles the word “mercy” is added to the list.
 - I Timothy 1:2
 - II Timothy 2:2
 - Titus 1:4
 - Philemon 3
 - These words at the beginning of Paul’s letters are more than simply his standard greeting as many have asserted. They signify God’s attitude toward the world today during the dispensation of grace. They are an official proclamation by the apostle of grace from the rejected Father and His rejected Son.
 - According to the prophetic time schedule set forth in time past, God should have dealt with the world in his wrath.
 - Psalm 2:4-5
 - Psalm 110:1-2—man’s declaration of war against God and His Christ was to be—and will be—visited with judgment. God will make a counter-declaration of war on a Christ-rejecting world during the 70th week of Daniel in the ages to come.
 - Acts 2:16-21—Peter declared to Israel that the last days of prophecy had not just arrived but that they had begun. The pouring out of God’s Spirit upon them would be followed by the pouring out of judgment upon his enemies.
 - Acts 2:32-35—Peter reaches back into Israel’s prophetic scriptures (Psalm 110:1-2) to call Israel to account for their part in the death of her Messiah. As of Acts 2, Christ had ascended into the heaven (Acts 1) to be seated at the right hand of God “until” the time came to execute Psalm 110:1-2 and make his foes his footstool.
 - Acts 7:51-56—Stephan saw Christ standing in the heavens getting ready to execute his wrath upon unbelieving Israel along with the Gentiles.
 - Just as the cup of Israel’s iniquity was full and the stage was set for the judgment of God to fall, God interrupted the prophetic program and reached down in His wondrous mercy and grace to save Saul of Tarsus, the leaders of the rebellion against Christ, and sent him forth as a special envoy to all nations, as an apostle of grace, to offer peace to His enemies everywhere through faith in Christ.
 - I Timothy 1:11-16

- For the majority of the past 2,000 years God's attitude toward the world has been grace and peace.

- II Corinthians 6:2—the entire dispensation of grace is day of salvation.

- II Corinthians 5:19—this verse does not mean that everyone is automatically saved or forgiven of all their sins rather it means that God's has temporarily stay the exaction of his wrath against sin.

- Revelation 19:11—the opposite of “grace and peace” is “judgment and war.”

- I Corinthians 1:3—God's official attitude toward the world today is “grace and peace.”
 - Ephesians 2:8-9—we are saved by grace through faith.
 - Romans 6:14—we are not under the governing principal of the law but under grace.
 - Ephesians 3:2—we live during the dispensation of grace.
 - Colossians 2:6—we live and walk by grace.