

STUDIES IN COLOSSIANS INTRODUCTION

Colossians 1:1–2 (ESV)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

² To the saints and faithful brothers in Christ at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God

An **apostle** was one who had been especially sent forth by the Lord Jesus as a messenger. The work of those with the distinctive gift of apostles and prophets had to do chiefly with the founding of the church.

Paul traces his apostleship to **the will of God**. He could never forget his Damascus experience.

Timothy our brother.

It is good to notice here a complete lack of the idea of hierarchy in Paul's attitude toward Timothy. Both were members of a common brotherhood. In the end, they were brothers loved by the same Heavenly Father.

to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ at Colossae.

Saints means that they are separated to God from the world and that as a result they should lead holy lives.

Faithful brethren indicates that they are children of a common Father through faith in the Lord Jesus; they are believing brothers and sisters.

in Christ conveys more of intimacy, acceptance, and security than any human mind can understand.

The geographical location of these believers is indicated by the expression **at Colossae**.

We are reminded that Paul was all about ministering to local churches. And in this case, had it not been for Epaphras being disciplined by Paul, we probably would have never heard of this small little town.

Paul now greets the saints with the lovely salutation:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

Grace was a common Greek expression, while **peace** was the common Jewish greeting; and the words were used at meeting or parting. Paul united them, and elevated their meaning and use.

Grace pictures God stooping down to sinful, lost humanity in loving and tender compassion.

Peace summarizes all that results in the life of a person when he accepts God's grace as a free gift.

The order of the words is significant: **grace** first, then **peace**. If God had not first acted in love and mercy toward us, we would still be in our sins.

But because He took the initiative and sent His Son to die for us, we now can have **peace with God**, peace with man, and the peace of God in our souls.

REFLECTION:

- * We are who we are and we do what we do "by the will of God."
- * We have been given the title of saints because we have separated our lives out for the glory of God.
- * We live in a communion relationship as faithful brothers and sisters in Christ.
- * God the Father bestows grace and peace upon us.