July 7, 2002 Northwest Bible Church

**Romans 1:7**

*Grace and Peace*

**INTRO**

 What do you think you need this morning? Often we think in terms of temporal and material needs. But the apostle Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, is telling us what the Spirit says we need, and that is GRACE AND PEACE.

**I. PAUL’S CUSTOMARY OPENING PRAYER.**

 We normally call this part of the introduction the Salutation. It also can be called a benediction, *a word of blessing* . But actually it is a form of a prayer.

 This was Paul’s customary opening prayer for the believers he wrote to:

See 1 Cor; 2 Cor; Gal; Eph; Phil. Etc. Slight variation in 1 Thess, (shorter); Titus (word order change); and 1 & 2 Timothy where Paul adds “mercy.”

**II. THE PRIORITY IS ON THE INNER MAN.**

 The priority is always on the inner man not the outer man. This is not to affirm the old gnostic heresy which taught that every thing physical and material is bad and evil and only that which is immaterial and spiritual is good. No, quite to the contrary the Bible acknowledges the blessings of God in our material and physical comforts. But still, our inner man is more important. Hear Paul in 2 Cor. 4:16 and Eph. 3:16.

**III. GRACE**

 A. Definition*.* Free, unmerited, undeserved favor or kindness of God to sinners who deserve only the wrath of God.

 B. Demonstration.

 1) Saving grace - election from before the foundation of the world, conviction, regeneration, gifts of repentance and faith, justification (Christ’s righteousness imputed to us), reconciliation, the indwelling Holy Spirit, adoption. All are grace gifts to us.

 But since Paul is talking to believers who are the CALLED, SAINTS, LOVED BY GOD, he probably has the following in mind.

 2) Sanctifying grace - everything we need to maintain and progress in our Christian lives. Grace includes the idea of the divine power which equips a believer to live a God-honoring life.

 What do you need for the spiritual well-being of your inner man? *Boldness in your faith? Fruit of the HS (love)? Victory over sin? Endurance for various trials? Stronger assurance of salvation? Closer walk with Christ?* Whatever it is, grace is the key.

**IV. PEACE**

 Comes from the Jewish traditional greeting, *SHALOM* . But, as with grace, it has been transformed into a Christian concept.

 A. Definition*.* Peace has the idea of tranquility, calmness, it is the opposite of turbulence, chaos, distress, inner commotion, anxiety, agitation.

 B. Demonstration.

 1) Justifying peace. This is normally referred to as **peace *with* God.** Romans 5:1.

 2) Sanctifying peace. This is normally referred to as **the peace *of* God.**  Phil. 4:7.

 a) Outer peace: Jewish concept of peace included well-being, success, prosperity.

 b) Inner peace: The peace Paul is praying for doesn’t just mean peaceful circumstances but inner peace in any circumstances. This is the peace Christ promised in Jn 14:27; 16:33. We can lose our peace. We regain it by following Ps. 119:165; Isa. 26:3; Phil. 4:6-7, etc.

**V. “FROM GOD OUR FATHER AND THE LORD JESUS CHRIST” -**

 God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ delight in giving grace and peace to us.

**CONCLUSION**