

## Paul's greetings in each of his letters

Introduction: If you were going to write a letter to someone that you loved very much, what would you say?

We are going to look at the Apostle Paul's greeting at the beginning of his letters to different church groups and people to see what he said to them.

"to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called *as saints*: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Ro 1:7 NAS95)

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (1Co 1:3 NAS95)

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (2Co 1:2 NAS95)

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ," (Ga 1:3 NAS95)

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Eph 1:2 NAS95)

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Php 1:2 NAS95)

"To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ *who are* at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father." (Col 1:2 NAS95)

"Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace." (1Th 1:1 NAS95)

"Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (2Th 1:2 NAS95)

"To Timothy, *my* true child in *the* faith: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." (1Ti 1:2 NAS95)

"To Timothy, my beloved son: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord." (2Ti 1:2 NAS95)

"To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior." (Tit 1:4 NAS95)

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phm 1:3 NAS95)

**GRACE:** Strong's 5485 "...of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection,..." (Online Bible Greek Lexicon)

**PEACE:** Strong's 1515 "... one, peace, quietness, rest, + set at one again...." (Online Bible Greek Lexicon)

Activity: Set at one again

Materials:

Coloring page "1" (1 per student)

Crayons, markers or colored pencils

Clear "write and wipe pockets" (or clear paper sheet protectors)

Expo markers or other dry board markers

Read the verses and note that Paul makes essentially the same statement in each letter. Read the Strong's definitions for "Grace" and "Peace" and point out that Paul is praying for grace...God causing them to turn to Christ and God keeping them and strengthening them. Point out that peace involved being set at one again, that in all the call for diversity, Paul is declaring one, in all the distractions (good and bad), we are to return to ONE.

Have each child color the number 1. Then, slide them into the "write and wipe pockets" (or you can use page protectors). Using dry erase markers, write on the pockets the things that we get caught up with. These can be our goals, plans, thoughts, and even the things about the Lord that we are coming to know or understand. Let them decorate the transparency as much as they want. As these things get added to the "1", it can be harder to see or focus on one. We might become upset when things don't go the way we think they should. We might get busy or distracted with all kinds of things.

Read one of the verses again and clean the pocket so that only the "1" remains.

NOTE: One of the kids traced the "1" on the transparency, removed the paper and replaced it so that the back side of the paper was on top. We could see her traced "1" on the outside of the transparency. She told us that this was "her 1". Then, she showed how it could be erased or defaced. She flipped over the transparency where the protected "1" was still clearly seen and said, "This is His '1'". Our oneness with Christ cannot be taken away. We talked about how we might want to be the one that remains and everyone else not disrupt our thing, but we cannot be the "1".

Song Option: to the melody from "Sound of Music"--"Doe a Deer":

One is peace; peace is One  
Two--and now there's conflict  
Three--we all run away  
Four--in anger we all spit  
Five--we run each other down!  
Six--we all fall to the ground!  
Seven--we stomp on someone's head  
And HE brings us back to ONE  
(repeat)

