

Grace and Peace to You

Romans, Part IV

Romans 1:1-7

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I. The Significance of Greetings

To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. A Prevalent Greeting

- 1 Corinthians 1:3 - *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- 2 Corinthians 1:2 - *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- Galatians 1:3 - *Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ,*
- Ephesians 1:2 - *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- Philippians 1:2 - *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- Colossians 1:2 - *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- 1 Thessalonians 1:1 - *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- 2 Thessalonians 1:2 - *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- 1 Timothy 1:2 - *Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.*
- 2 Timothy 1:2 - *Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.*
- Titus 1:4 - *Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.*
- Philemon 3 - *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
- 1 Peter 1:2 - *Grace to you and peace be multiplied.*
- 2 Peter 1:2 - *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,*
- 2 John 3 - *Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ...*
- Revelation 1:4-5 - *Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.*

III. Grace and Peace

A. Meaning (cf. Is 48:22; Rom 3:9; 5:1; 8:7; 2 Cor 5:20; Eph 2:1)

Grace is *“the unmerited goodness or love of God to those who have forfeited it...”* (71, 435). Peace denotes a state of harmony, concord, security, even health, whether with God or with others.

_____ *always precedes peace.* The Lutheran commentator R.C.H. Lenski writes (54):

“Grace is always first, peace always second. This is due to the fact that grace is the source of peace. Without grace there is and can be no peace; but when grace is ours, peace is ours also.”

Whereas we are by nature estranged from God, through *the grace of God*, through faith in Jesus, we can be *reconciled to God* and have *peace with God*. _____, *therefore, is the foundation of peace.*

B. Background (Num 6:24-27 cf. Lev 9:22)

²⁴“The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; ²⁶The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.” ‘²⁷“So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them.”

Note the order. We have first a general blessing (24), then an invocation of God’s grace (25), and, finally, a pronouncement of peace (26). _____ is the foundation of peace.

C. Source (cf. Rev1:4-5)

Grace and peace flow from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. You cannot have the Father without the Son nor can you have the Son without the Father – and we have both by the Spirit.

An Outline of Romans

- I. Introduction
 - A. Opening Greeting (1:1-7)
 - B. Travel Plans (1:8-15)
 - C. Theme (1:16-17)
- II. Credenda: “The Righteous by Faith” Shall Live
 - A. God’s Wrath vs. Unrighteousness (1:18-3:20)
 - B. The Revelation of God’s Righteousness (3:21-5)
 - C. The Triumph of God’s Righteousness (6-8)
 - D. The Universality of God’s Righteousness (9-11)
- III. Agenda: The Righteous “Shall Live by Faith”
 - A. Transformed not Conformed (12-13)
 - B. Patient not Proud (14-15:13)
- IV. Conclusion
 - A. Paul, Minister to the Gentiles (15:14-21)
 - B. Travel Plans (15:22-33)
 - C. Closing Greetings and Benediction (16)

IV. Application

Fundamentally, _____ convey honor and respect. To refuse to greet another is often a profound insult and should only be done carefully and intentionally – it should not be the norm.

The way we greet others is shaped by *the* _____ in which we find ourselves. Some settings demand a more thoughtful greeting. We don't have to level all greetings (Rom 16:3-16, 21-23).

1) Evangelism (Mt 10:11-15)

¹¹“Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out. ¹²And when you go into a household, greet it. ¹³If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. ¹⁵Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city! (Mt 10)

Jesus insists that when you go into a household, greet it – *be courteous, show respect*. But Jesus draws a distinction between greeting and _____. The household that will not *receive you nor hear your words* is a house upon which you are not to proclaim *peace*. Don't give false assurance to those who reject Christ. *Peace* is not automatic; it comes only from trust in Christ.

2) Public Worship

Public worship is one of the more significant settings of our lives. This is why a number of years ago we designated a separate part of our liturgy as a greeting. So have you permitted these greetings to shape you?

3) Greeting the Brethren

The NT gives instruction regarding these greetings:

- Romans 16:16 - *Greet one another with a holy kiss.*
- 1 Corinthians 16:20 - *All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss.*
- 2 Corinthians 13:12 - *Greet one another with a holy kiss.*
- 1 Thessalonians 5:26 - *Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss.*
- 1 Peter 5:14 - *Greet one another with a kiss of love.*

The Scriptures demand that our greetings be _____ and not merely verbal. Covid distancing is not and should never be the norm. Human touch is an essential element of life. _____ greetings proclaim that you are fundamentally a human being made in God's image not a bearer of diseases. Such contact is to be “*holy*” – not sexually suggestive but relationally rich. So Paul commands us to treat “*older men as fathers, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity*” (cf. 1 Tim 5:1).

4) Sinful Greetings (Mt 26:49; Lk 11:43; 20:46; 2 Jn 10-11)

Greetings, like all things, can go to seed; they can become sinful and corrupted. So Judas betrayed Jesus with a greeting and a kiss. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees: “*Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seats in the synagogues and _____ in the marketplaces*” (Lk 11:43). So there are times we should refuse to greet others. The Apostle John writes: “*If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor _____ him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds*” (2 Jn 10–11). The Lord's honor needs to be more important to us than the honor of others.

V. Conclusion