

Multiplied Grace 2 Peter 1:2-5

2 Peter 1:2 (NKJV) Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Is “grace and peace” just a standard greeting, or is there more meaning to this?

Peter is greeting us, to be sure, blessing us with both grace and peace. But, there is more to this than just a greeting. Peter says, “Grace and peace be multiplied to you,” and then he tells us how grace and peace can be (or are) multiplied to us. God gives grace in abundance. He favors us. But, there is always a more abundant supply of grace. Multiplication implies a doubling, tripling, quadrupling, or even increasing a hundredfold.

However, before we consider how grace is multiplied, we must understand our need for grace. Do you understand our need for grace and peace?

We need grace for this life and for the life to come. Let’s consider our need for grace for the life to come first.

We all live with the reality that we will die someday. We do not know when or how, but we know it will happen. (I will put in at this point the exception that I do not expect this generation of God’s children to die. I expect that we will be caught up to meet Jesus in the air. And, this makes the need for grace even more urgent.)

People of all times have wondered what happens after death. As far as I know, every culture and every people group believes in an after-life. Communism has unsuccessfully tried to stamp this out of the people and places it has under its control.

The Bible, and thus God, says:

Hebrews 9:27 (NKJV) And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment...

Judgment is a reason we need grace. Look at the point Hebrews 9 is making.

Hebrews 9:27–28 (NKJV) ²⁷And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, ²⁸so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

Jesus dying so that we will not have to suffer the penalty for our sins is pure grace. Eagerly waiting for Him is an indication that we have received this grace. The truth of God's grace demonstrated in Jesus is expressed in a well-known verse.

John 3:16 (NKJV) For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

God loved us and sent His Son. This act is the very definition of grace. Grace is undeserved favor, and grace is the premise of the gospel.

This world is at enmity with God. It is hostile toward God. In fact, we were all God's enemies. Romans 5:10 tells us.

Romans 5:8–10 (NKJV) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were still sinners**, Christ died for us. ... For **if when we were enemies** we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, ...

God says we were sinners and His enemies. This hostility toward God is part of the reason there is evil in the world. We desperately need to be reconciled to God. We need peace. We need peace with God and peace in our hearts and minds.

Grace and peace with God are not just for the judgment or the afterlife. We need peace with God here and now for this life, and, in fact, we experience God's grace with every breath we breathe.

Do you enjoy a beautiful sunset? That is a gift from God. Do you enjoy a glass of orange juice? This also is a gift from God. We experience God's grace in countless ways, including peace. We experience peace beyond comprehension when we leave all our cares and anxieties with Him. Philippians 4:6-7 speaks of this peace.

Philippians 4:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

We can take everything that concerns us and weighs us down and ask God for what we need. Jesus told us:

John 14:27 (NKJV) Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

The question for us today is, “If Jesus has given us His peace, why are our hearts troubled? Why are we not experiencing His peace?”

Just before He said He gave His peace, Jesus gave one answer to this question. He said:

John 14:1 (NKJV) Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

From this verse, we understand that a key to peace is faith. We must believe in God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here is where we learn how grace and peace are multiplied to us. Let’s look at 2 Peter 1:2-3.

2 Peter 1:2–3 (NKJV) ²Grace and peace be multiplied to you **in** the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, **through** the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

In verse two, the Scriptures say, “...in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.” In this context, the word “in” could also be translated as “by.” However, verse three connects to this thought and says all things have been given us “**through**” the knowledge of Him.

From this, we gather that we find grace and peace multiplied to us through the knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord.

I think I can illustrate this through an incident that happened when Peter was with Jesus. On this occasion, Jesus and His disciples were in a boat on the Sea of Galilee (Lake Tiberius).

Matthew 8:23–27 (NKJV) ²³Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. ²⁴And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. ²⁵Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, “Lord, save us! We are perishing!” ²⁶But He said to them, “Why are you fearful, O you of **little faith**?” Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. ²⁷So the men marveled, saying, “**Who can this be**, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?”

They marveled because they did not really know who Jesus was. And, this was the reason for their “little faith.”

When Jesus said that He was the way, the truth, and the life, the following discussion occurred.

John 14:8–9 (NKJV) ⁸Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.”

⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, **and yet you have not known Me, Philip?** He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

The disciples were troubled and afraid because they did not know Jesus, who and what He was and is. They lacked faith for the same reason.

They had two things that were obstacles to their understanding. First, they only saw Jesus in His physical form. (The exception being one event on the Mt. of Transfiguration.) He walked like them, talked like them, slept like them, and ate like them. So, for all they saw, He was one of them, except for the miracles.

The second obstacle was that the Holy Spirit had not yet been given. On the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was given, they were transformed. In an instant, they went from cowering in hiding places in Jerusalem to changing the world for Christ. One reason for this transformation is explained in John 16.

John 16:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, **He will guide you into all truth**; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ¹⁴He will glorify Me, for **He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.**

They had first-hand experience of Jesus, but they needed the Holy Spirit to make the truth clear to them.

I fear that many of us lack firsthand experience with Jesus.

We get this experience by spending time with Him. There is no substitute for spending time in the Word of God for yourself.

It has always been easy to let other things crowd Jesus out, but it is especially so today. For example, consider this statistic.

According to a survey conducted in February 2021, nearly half of the respondents stated that, on average, they spent **five to six hours** on their phone on a daily basis, not including work-related smartphone use.¹

Fewer than five people in a hundred said that they spent no time or less than an hour a day on their phone. The point is that we spend much more time with social media than we spend with our Bibles, with Jesus.

Jesus has promised the Holy Spirit, and He told us that abiding in Him means abiding in His words.

John 15:7 (NKJV) If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

We can trust His promise to provide the Holy Spirit, but we must make time to be in His word. Psalm 1 tells us that the blessed or happy person meditates on God's word day and night.

I am not trying to push a legalistic requirement. But I am trying to urge you to consider a path of multiplied grace and peace.

Nothing in this life or the next is more valuable than knowledge of God and Jesus Christ our Lord. In Jeremiah, the Lord says,

Jeremiah 9:23–24 (NKJV): ²³Thus says the Lord:

“Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,

Let not the mighty man glory in his might,

Nor let the rich man glory in his riches;

²⁴But let him who glories glory in this,

That he understands and knows Me,

That I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth.

For in these I delight,” says the Lord.

¹ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1224510/time-spent-per-day-on-smartphone-us>. Accessed August 4, 2021.