

Theme: God gives the blessing of grace, mercy, and peace to His people, the Church, through Jesus Christ.

I. Intro - The Writings of John

- A. A major part of the NT, unique theology and terminology
- B. The Gospel especially focuses on Deity - signs & I AM
- C. Three letters written to a community struggling with error
- D. They help define what Authentic Christianity is & is not
- E. This is critical for us today - many tempted to alter the faith to fit with current culture

II. The Apostle Writes To God's Church

- A. The opening greeting
 - The elder, To the chosen lady and her children**, whom I love in the truth — and not I only, but also all who know the truth — 2 John 1:1
 - 1. I will cover this in After Hours
 - 2. The elder - referring to the Apostle John
 - 3. The chosen lady and her children - a local church and its members
 - 4. Probably the same community in Asia where John sent 1 John and 3 John, originally his Gospel
- B. The Church - God's chosen people
 - The elder, To the **chosen** lady and her children, whom I love in the truth — and not I only, but also all who know the truth — 2 John 1:1
 - 1. The Church is God's chosen, elect people

- 2. John ends the letter with this fact as well
 - The children of **your chosen sister** send their greetings. 2 John 1:13
- 3. A common theme in NT
 - Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To God's **elect**, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, 1 Peter 1:1
 - a. They may be strangers in the land of their exile, but not to God!
 - b. They are the chosen of God! - But you are a **chosen** people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. 1 Peter 2:9
 - c. We have been chosen by God and are His nation of priests, His Holy nation, and we belong to Him
 - d. This is the Church - God's only Chosen people - Who will bring any charge against those whom God has **chosen**? It is God who justifies. Romans 8:33
 - e. This is our security in troubled times - we have been chosen by God!
 - f. This is the "election" that really matters - God has "voted" for us, and no one can "vote" against us!
- 4. Everything else flows from this fact - we have been chosen by God
- 5. Christian take comfort - you are part of God's chosen people, loved by Him from all eternity, and secure to all eternity!

III. The Authentic Blessing of God

A. We are blessed with authentic grace

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. 2 John 1:3

1. 'Grace' was a common Christian greeting in letters
 - a. Sounds similar to a normal greeting in Greek letters
 - b. Such an important concept for believers!
 - c. Grace - a favorable disposition towards someone
 - d. Grace - the unmerited favor of God towards us!
2. John only uses 'grace' 7x in his writings
3. But grace is still critical in his writings
 - a. All 7 occurrences are related to Jesus Christ - grace is only found through Christ
 - b. Jesus is full of grace and truth and gives us grace

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of **grace** and truth... ¹⁶ For from his fullness we have all received, **grace** upon **grace**. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; **grace** and truth came through Jesus Christ. John 1:14,16-17
ESV

 1. Jesus is FULL of grace (and truth - next week)
 2. From Him we receive overflowing grace
 3. Grace (and truth) come through Jesus
 - c. Scripture ends with a benediction of grace

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen. Revelation 22:21

1. These are the last words of John's writing
2. These are the last words of Scripture - a blessing of the grace of Jesus on God's people!

4. Grace is the first and last word of the Christian life!

B. We are blessed with authentic mercy

Grace, **mercy** and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. 2 John 1:3

1. Mercy 26x in NT, but only here in John's writings
2. But it appears over 300 times in the LXX
3. Mercy (ἔλεος) meant love directed to someone in need in Greek generally
4. But in LXX it was almost exclusively used to translate τῶν (hesed) - God's faithful, unchanging, steadfast covenant love to His people.

Surely goodness and **love** will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalm 23:6

 - a. Mercy is God's love that pursues His lamb, even when it strays
 - b. Mercy keeps us until we see Him face to face

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever. ² Give thanks to the God of gods. His love endures forever. ³ Give thanks to the Lord of lords: His love endures forever. Psalm 136:1-3
 - c. God's covenant love/mercy endures FOREVER!
 - d. His mercy covers all our sin and sustains our life
 - e. No matter how great our sin, His mercy is MORE!

5. Mercy pursues and covers us - now and into eternity!

C. We are blessed with authentic peace

Grace, mercy and **peace** from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. 2 John 1:3

1. Peace (shalom) was the common Jewish greeting
2. It was adopted by Christians and often added to grace - Grace and peace 13 NT letter greetings!
3. The Hebrew concept of shalom is more than just inner calm or lack of conflict; it is the entire state of well-being, knowing we are under the favor of God with all things being rightly ordered by God.
4. Peace is first & foremost our right standing with God
Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 5:1
 - a. This is the foundational peace - and it comes through Christ alone and is received by faith alone
 - b. Because of Jesus Christ we are at peace with God!
5. For Christians, our peace in this world is found in and through Jesus Christ
Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:27
 - a. Our peace is in Jesus and is given to us by Him
 - b. His peace is NOT the peace of the world, which is dependent on circumstances and comes and goes.
6. The peace given to us in Christ survives even the troubles of this world

I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. John 16:33

- a. We have peace "in Christ". To be in Him is to have peace.
 - b. But in the world we WILL have trouble,
 - c. This includes all of the normal troubles of living in a fallen world. "Peace is not the subtraction of problems from life. Peace is the addition of Jesus Christ to meet those problems." (Scott R.)
 - d. This also includes opposition to us from the unbelieving world because of the faith. This is a normal part of the Christian life.
 - e. But we can have peace even under trial and persecution because Jesus has overcome the world!
7. Peace fills the Christian's heart and mind, and puts us at ease even when suffering in this world because we know that in Christ God is for us!

IV. Applying the Authentic Word

A. Am I in Christ?

1. All of these blessings are only found in Christ
Grace, mercy and peace **from God the Father and from Jesus Christ**, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. 2 John 1:3
 - a. Authentic blessing comes from God, not the world
 - b. Authentic blessing is only through Jesus Christ
 - c. Apart from Christ there is no grace, mercy, & peace
2. Are you 'in Christ'? Have you come to Him in faith?

B. Am I living in the reality of this authentic blessing?

1. If you are in Christ this blessing IS yours
2. This is not a second stage or something we achieve
3. This is the AUTHENTIC REALITY for every believer
4. Are my thoughts shaped by this authentic reality or by the false report of the world?
5. Christian this week live in the reality of authentic blessing!
 - a. Your life begins and ends with grace
 - b. You are kept by mercy now and into eternity
 - c. The peace of God surrounds you day and night, no matter the troubles of this life

C. The Table of Authentic Blessing

Authentic Blessing

2 John 1-3
January 3, 2021
Communion
2 John 3

Teaching keywords: Blessing; grace; mercy and mercy ministry; peace and comfort

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. 2 John 1:3

The elder, To the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in the truth — and not I only, but also all who know the truth — ² because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever: ³ Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love. 2 John 1:1–3