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Colossians Transcription  
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Colossians 1:1-2

## True Peace

**Col 1:1-2** *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, 2 To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are in Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Today I'm just going to read the first couple of verses again and I guarantee I won't get past them again. These letters start out with some hugely important realities, so I'm not in any hurry.

Last time, we did a little introduction to the class and then talked about grace for the majority of the time. I feel like we could spend several weeks talking about grace, but just to review for a few minutes, I'll say a couple different things about grace, then spend the rest of our time this morning talking about peace.

I tried to describe grace last time as the eternal and full flow of Christ to the human soul. I like thinking of it that way. Grace is Christ given to you, working in you everything that you need and everything that pleases the Father. **Grace is not just a pardon for what you're not, it is the giving to you of all that Christ is.** And when you begin to see and experience grace, you begin to experience it in that way.

You begin to experience a new light, a new nature, a new mind working in you, as Paul talks about... "The Law of the Spirit of life working in us, fulfilling the righteous requirements of the law..."

Grace isn't about God lowering His standard. His standard is never lowered—His nature is consistent and His requirements are consistent. Grace fulfills God's standard by giving you Christ AS justification and righteousness and truth and light and love. And these are not just statuses or positions. I mean, I hear people talk sometimes like grace gives you some kind of nebulous status before God, but it remains very far from an experience or an inward reality.

I want to say very clearly that grace isn't like a stamp that God put over your life that allows you to screw up and still go to Heaven. No, its so much more than that. Again,

grace is this perfect, eternal flow of Christ. It's like a river of Christ from the Father to your soul, and this river IS your righteousness, is your truth, is your everything...

Now whether you're knowing that grace and walking in that grace, like Paul says in Romans 5:2 or Ephesians 3... Whether *by faith you're accessing* that grace is another issue. Whether you're coming to experience that grace, grow in that grace, experience the sufficiency of grace, and learning to live by that grace and walk by that grace, that's another question altogether.

But whether we see what grace is or not, we can't change the definition based on our lack of light. Grace is Christ.

I mentioned this briefly last week, but I want to say a couple of things about nullifying or falling short of the grace of God.

Paul says, "I've been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me. The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." And then he says, "I do not nullify the grace of God," right on the heels of this famous verse. The location of this phrase is massively important. He put it right after the description of the fact that he was dead and that Christ was the life that was working in him.

The only reason he can say, "I don't nullify the grace of God," is because Paul wasn't living by anything other than the grace of God! He wasn't holding up anything of his own before God. He wasn't claiming even a life of his own, let alone a righteousness of his own or a wisdom of his own. He didn't have a life of his own.

What I'm trying to say is that the way that Paul avoided nullifying the grace of God was by living in the reality that it is "not I but Christ." Maybe if I switch that around, I can say it a little stronger. Let me say it this way – If God has given you His Son, to whatever extent you are still living in and by a nature that He has judged and rejected, to that extent you are nullifying the grace of God.

Nullifying the grace of God has to do with receiving something and not using it, not knowing it, not living it or by it. That's obviously the natural position of an unbeliever because God is offering grace to unbelievers and they aren't even accepting it. But it's also the starting place of every new believer, where God has given the soul something truly amazing that we simply don't know.

So, grace isn't just this impersonal 'condition.' Grace is Christ. It's a flow of life and light and nature and judgment and righteousness, and all that Christ is. And to know grace, we must know Christ in these ways.

## Peace

Now I want to say a few things about peace. Paul is wishing the believer an ever-greater experience and reality of peace. And the first thing I want to say about peace is that peace is Christ.

I just said that about grace!... and people sometimes say to me, "Jason, you say *everything* is Christ!" (They say this like it's some kind of complaint, or that there's something wrong with it, or it's an insult or problem) But everything IS Christ! Absolutely everything spiritual is Christ in Substance. We must understand this.

The only relevant question when we're looking at words like peace or grace, or at pictures in the Old Covenant like the tabernacle, or the offerings, or the Red Sea, or whatever, the only question is not, "What is that pointing to," because I think Christ is the answer to that question. **The truly relevant question for us is, "In what way is that word or shadow making known something of Christ, and am I experiencing that way?"**

Do you see what I'm saying? Sure everyone can say that the Passover lamb is Christ. Everyone can say that the High Priest is Christ, or everyone can say that the Promised Land is Christ. That's not hard to say. You can teach a parrot to say it. But you're no better having said these things until the reason God used the word or that shadow to point to His Son becomes alive in you. Then you begin to experience Christ in that particular way.

We aren't trying to decode the bible. I'm teaching a class called The Types and Shadows of Christ in the Old Testament and the sad temptation in most of our hearts a lot of times is to go through the Old Testament and "decode" it to find out what everything points to. But these things must become the absolute obsession of our soul, we must long to experience Christ in these ways, not just to know that such and such points to Christ. That is useless.

**What we're trying to do is to know, live in, abide in, experience the One that God was seeing from the very beginning.**

Now think about this with me – Do you really think that God is speaking about something separate from Christ? If you think about it that way, it sounds rather absurd. Christ is the radiance of God's image, the express image of God, the manifestation of His glory... He's the living Word, that which fully and perfectly communicates all that is good and true and right and real in God. Anything that is natural that's good is pointing toward some facet of Him.

Now, do we really think God, in this Bible, is attempting to speak to us about something outside of Christ? I hope that appears completely absurd to your heart, because it is absurd.

As it says in Proverbs where Wisdom is speaking talking about how God created the world; how He created the sons of men, but God's delight was in Him (Wisdom)... "I was daily

beside Him. I was His delight." (Prov. 8) God has always been seeing, beholding, knowing this eternal Word. He's been seeing this one that is the perfect expression of Himself, and the gospel is about Him inviting us into the One that He is beholding!.. so that we can behold Him and know Him and experience all that is real and true in Him. That's what the gospel is about.

I picture the Father seeing all things perfect and complete in His Son, and everything that He wants to say to you—whether it's in types and shadows, whether it's in the pictures of light and darkness and growth in the natural creation... Whether it's in the words of Scripture, the testimony of the Holy Spirit, through other members of the Body of Christ, everything He's trying to say to you is, "Come into here and know Him, because that's eternal life." Eternal life is when you live by Him and see Him and eat Him and drink Him and know Him.

It's like God says, "I don't really need to say anything, but if I'm going to say anything to a human being, if I'm going to say anything at all, I'm going to say something about Him. I'm going to describe something that's real in Him. I'm going to throw out a fishing hook that hooks you and brings you back to Him. I'm not going to throw out little candies for your carnal soul to chew on.

"If I'm going to communicate to you, I only have one thing to say!" And then of course in the Incarnation, this perfect expression of God and all that He is, all that God could ever say to humanity, takes on the form of a man, goes into the world and says, "My words are Spirit and truth." He says, **"I'm going to say it to you plainly, in your language, with parables. I'm going to tell it to you in the best that words can say it. I'm bringing you back to where I came so you can know Me."**

We make Christianity about a million other things, but it's all about going back (right now in the soul, not after the body dies) to where He is, in order to know Him. It's about an arm that comes out from God, grabs a people who will join themselves to Him in death, burial, and resurrection—and marriage, that's another picture—and the arm of the Lord works salvation... Remember where it says in Isaiah, "There was no one else to do it." God looked and He was astonished. There was no other way to do it, so the right arm of God comes out from Him (which is Christ), scoops up a people that are willing to bear His death, and brings them back into the same union of life shared between the Father and Son.

Jesus's last prayer was that "they may be one, as you and I are one, as it was in the beginning... I want them to know this glory we've had from the beginning." What is this glory but the ever-present perfect knowing, seeing, revealing of God... Christ wants to bring them back into that relationship, that knowing.

My point in saying all of that is because it's ridiculous— and I hope it gets to be ridiculous in your minds—what we do in the church today. We have God talking about a bunch of other

stuff! “Here’s the word of the Lord to you: You’re going to have a career change in the year 2014!” Is that really what God wants to talk about? Is that really the word of the Lord, or is the word of the Lord the insane love of God to bring you into the fullness of the knowledge of Christ. And if that’s really what the love of God is, then everything God has said with words (which are just types and shadows) points you to that reality.

God called his Son the Prince of Peace. Christ said “blessed are the peacemakers”. What do these words mean? Is He the Prince of Peace because He’s trying to stop war between countries? Is He the Prince of Peace because He’s trying to make me stop fighting with my mother-in-law? What IS the Prince of Peace? What do these things mean?

And the answer to all these questions is never going to be found, seen, or experienced unless you follow the breadcrumb trail back to where it came from. You see that word “peacemaker” came out from somewhere, somewhere alive, and God is inviting you back into it. God’s words, His miracles, the types and shadows, His Spirit come out from Him and they leave a little trail, and are only ever trying to do one thing. It’s not trying to fix and transform the realm of the shadow to make it nicer for you to live there and set your heart there. Oh no. The words of God come out from Him and if you have the kind of heart that’s willing to see it, then it’s going to take you back the same way it came out and bring you right back into a living experience of Christ. That’s what God’s words will always do if you let them.

So God was seeing Christ, and knowing that the only peace that has any spiritual reality to it, any meaning to it... The only peace He would ever, ever want to talk about, was in Christ, as Christ. There’s only one reality of peace He wants to talk about and show you—and maybe there are shadows of it in the visible created world—but if you have faith that looks beyond the shadow (and that’s what faith always does... It always sees beyond the shadows...), if you have faith, then the shadow is going to take you to the exact same place it’s taken every person who’s ever had faith in all of history. Faith is going to take you right back to the source, and it’s going to show you a relationship of peace.

Even if that’s all we said today, that would be a very important thing if we could see that and reckon with that in our hearts.

What is God saying through words? What is God doing in your life? You’re not going to find the answer to that question outside of Christ because He is talking about one living Word. An image came to my mind... it’s pretty silly. But I thought of a crowded, beautiful wedding. And the bride and the groom are staring at each other with tears in their eyes because they’ve been waiting for this day... And then it’s time for the vows. And during the vows, they begin to pour out their hearts. They say these wonderful things about the other person. They say that they want to love them and serve them forever, til ‘death do you part’, etc.

But wouldn't it be absolutely strange if the groom stood up in front of his beautiful bride, looked her right into the eyes, and everyone is there listening, and then the groom opens his mouth, chokes back the tears, and then starts talking about his pet hamster!... about his nice, furry little face, and big, bulging cute eyes! That would be the most absurd thing! Why in the world would you do that, when you're staring into the eyes of your beloved bride?

That's ridiculous, but that's what we think God is doing! We want to have God's voice and God's words and miracles speaking outside of Christ, testifying of something outside of this One that He sees, this One that He loves, this eternal, perfect Son. Why would He say anything else? Well, He wouldn't say anything else.

**He delights in His Son. He sees His Son. He knows His Son, and the whole gospel is an invitation into that relationship with Him, a relationship of pure seeing and delighting and knowing and eating and drinking of that Son.**

And there are a many pictures of this in the bible. One of my favorites is where the Israelites can't go up to the mountain because God has put these markers around it and it's completely off-limits to the flesh. Then there's this blood shed and sprinkled around the mountain, and a door opens up, and seventy of them—representing “the whole,”—go up with Moses and Aaron... And it says, “They saw God, and they ate and drank with Him.” And that's the gospel. That's it.

**So... What is peace?** Again, words fall short, but if I were to try to give a short definition of peace, like I did for grace, **I see peace as a condition in the human soul where all the enemies of God have been destroyed, where all hostility, where all enmity has been totally removed.**

Peace isn't a feeling, although experiencing peace can create feelings, and usually those feelings are good because there's no contrariness, there's no hostility, there's no enmity. But peace is defined in a view and in an experience of Christ. Just like grace isn't defined by the lack of punishment and is defined by the gift of Christ, peace is not defined by the lack of tribulations. It's defined by the presence of Christ's increase, His presence in the soul in such a way where there's no longer anything in you that isn't perfectly aligned with Him. That's what peace is all about.

**Peace is when the soul of man is happily aligned with and obedient to an indwelling King in every single corner and high place and valley of the soul. Where every place within the boundaries of Israel—and what is Israel but a place for God to dwell and glorify Himself?--is conformed to the reign of righteousness.** The Israel of God is a land, an environment in which God lives and glorifies Himself.

How does He do that? He does that by filling the land with peace, because when the land is hostile to its King, then first of all there's a whole bunch of stuff in the land that doesn't

reflect that King... Second of all, there's a constant war going on between the one who owns the land and the things that don't belong in the land. That's what the whole Old Testament is about. If you start in Joshua chapter 5 to the end of 2 Chronicles, that's what it is! It's a story about a land that for the most part, won't pursue peace.

It's extremely important that we understand that the peace isn't with the Philistines! "There's no peace for the wicked." In other words, **God doesn't make peace with Adam, God makes peace by killing Adam!** That's what all of these seemingly horrible pictures are about in the Old Testament.

The only way to get true peace isn't by making treaties with the Amorites and the Jebusites, etc.. No, and we know that to whatever extent they did that, they had a thorn in their flesh and they had a constant presence of something hostile to Israel in the land. And we see that most clearly in the book of Judges.

There's only one short window where we see the kingdom operating in peace, and that's in the reign of Solomon, because of the conquest of David. So David is the type and shadow of the Prince of Peace, but how did he establish peace in the land? **The prince of peace killed the flesh.** Here was another view of Christ—David the judge, David the one who spread the judgment throughout the land, killing everything, going out and in everything he did he was successful in destroying and cutting off flesh.

Saul says, "Go and get me one hundred foreskins of Philistines," and David comes back with two hundred. Even when he's being persecuted by Saul, he's making raids on the Philistine camps. David was a man of blood. God said so Himself. David testifies of Christ in the cross; Christ the end of flesh. He's Christ the end of the Adamic man. That's how He becomes the prince of peace - "he abolished in His flesh the enmity." (Eph 2:15)

Solomon is also a picture of Christ, the One who reigns in the soul, in peace, the finished work. They're both Christ. They're both pictures of Christ... And then Jesus comes and says, "Greater than Solomon is here." "Greater peace than they ever knew is here..."

The Jews wanted Jesus to restore natural peace by removing the Romans from the land, but Jesus said, "There's something greater than that." But they said, "What you're describing is less than what we want!" and that's the foolishness of looking back to the shadow, which is exactly what we do today.

**Peace is a condition in your soul. And yes there are joyful feelings that come along with true peace. In fact, the kingdom of God is "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit," Paul says. Righteousness is a nature that has filled the land. Peace is the full congruity and alignment of the soul with the King. And Joy is the natural result of those two things, in the Spirit of God. Now that's a really interesting description of the kingdom of God, if you ask me.**

**Peace is when the soul of man has no more fleshy enemies rising up against David, fighting against its own king. There's no more civil war in the human soul. There's no more suicide. That's what the soul does. It commits slow suicide by fighting against its own king.**

That's what Saul kept doing. The whole story of Saul is the story of this sad person – it's just you, it's just me—trying to reign. Saul was the first one that reigned in the soul but he was replaced by one far greater. But he just could not give up that kingdom. He just couldn't do it!

And in moments of clarity he'd say, "David I'm a flea and you're the king... and I know it, everyone knows it, the whole land knows it. You're the one who's going to reign, and if I knew what was good for me, I'd just give you the kingdom." He'd say that and he'd cry, but then three days later he'd start fighting against David again, just like we do. Over and over and over and over again.

"Awww, David, I spent the last six months chasing you and you could have killed me, but you're trying to save my soul. Why am I persecuting you?" And David says, "I don't know. I'm not trying to kill you, Saul, I'm trying to kill Philistines. I'm trying to save the soul and kill the flesh, and you're trying to kill me!"

**And such is the life of the average Christian, fighting against the True King, committing slow suicide every day, persecuting the only One who brings true peace. Saul could never get victory over the enemies of the Lord. He didn't even recognize who the enemies of the Lord were. That's the whole problem with Saul!**

He kept the enemies, kept certain things he did like, and killed certain things he didn't like—just like you... just like me.

But peace was established, peace became a reality through a man of bloodshed, through a whole bunch of really horrible (naturally speaking) stories of flesh being completely cast out and cut off from the land. And then Israel sat down in peace and joy.

Did you ever read that story of when Solomon dedicates the temple, and the whole land is full of righteousness, peace, and joy? And everyone is rejoicing, and they do this ceremony for seven days, and everyone says, "Let's just do it for another seven days!" And Solomon is handing out raisin cakes and there's blood everywhere! The numbers of sheep and oxen and things he's sacrificing must have been staggering. People must have been up to their ankles in blood, dancing and praising. I just can't even imagine... That's just so much blood... all of it a picture of the only reason they COULD celebrate.... the only reason they could have peace. The death of the flesh.

But the people are happy, they don't even want to go back to their homes, they're all dancing around Jerusalem, and then it says he sent them all back to their homes, finally, in

gladness of heart and peace was in the land, and they had a righteous king to reign over them.

And then the Queen of Sheba comes and she says, "This is God's love for Israel! He's put you as the king. That's how He's loved this people—He's put you over them. And that's what He did. And friends, if we could see that, then we'd want that peace in us... We'd stop fighting against our true peace. We'd stop warring against the David who's trying to kill the things that are contrary to God's work in the soul.

**God's peace is not with the Adamic man. There's no peace with Adam.**

**And I don't say this to be mean... I just say it because I think it's true and needs to be said, but the most popular gospel I hear today, and probably the most popular gospel a hundred years ago, five hundred years ago, etc., is a gospel of God making peace with Adam. It's of God offering Adam a grace that applies to him, and a peace that applies to him.**

It's just like what God was saying to the prophets over and over again, "There are false prophets in the land." What are they saying? What's their prophecy? "They're saying, 'Peace, peace, where there's no peace.' They're proclaiming a false peace. They're saying there's no judgment against this people."

And of course the true prophets were hated and killed for this, but what was their message? Judgment! That was their message. God is coming to kill a people, and establish a new restored, resurrected people, only after death, burial, and resurrection [or captivity and restoration]. God is coming with a sword! "Bow your neck to Nebuchadnezzar... He's coming."

And all the false prophets would say, "No, no," and slap the real prophets in the mouth and say, "Who are you to say such negative things about Israel?"

**Here's what I'm trying to say... The great false gospel in the days of the prophets was this: Peace, peace, when there was no peace. That was the false gospel. In my opinion, that is the great false gospel today. It is a gospel that really isn't a gospel. It's a gospel that tries to make peace with the wrong man, instead of experiencing David's crucifixion and killing of that man so that true peace is found in the absence of him, the soul's freedom from the man that is contrary to God.**

In other words, we think that David's job is to go through the whole land of Israel kissing babies and shaking hands, trying to make friends with all the Amorites and Jebusites, etc., having an influential campaign where he's going to make peace with these guys.

But what was the main thing God kept saying before they went into the land? "Don't make peace with these people!... Don't make treaties, don't let them live!"

What did God do every single time the Spirit of God fell upon one of the forty judges? It says, "The Spirit of God fell up on so-and-so, and he killed a thousand Philistines with a jawbone of an ass..." "The Spirit of God fell upon What's Her Name and she drove a stake through the temple of a guy sleeping in her tent..." "The Spirit of God fell on Gideon and he took three hundred men and slayed twenty thousand," or whatever...

The Spirit of God fell upon them and what did He do? It killed flesh! That's what He did. **If the Spirit of God falls on you, I guarantee He's there to fulfill those pictures, to do the exact same thing. He's not there to make peace with your flesh. He's there to make peace in your soul by killing your flesh.**

Solomon had a reign of peace because his father prepared that reign. And David (Christ the judge) he's the one who cleared out the land so that the house could actually reign in peace. Peace isn't the pardoning of Adam, it is the crucifixion of Adam. It is a death to Adam in the soul.

In Ephesians 2 Paul says Christ is our peace. He doesn't say Christ gave you some peace. How is He our peace? Because in the cross He destroyed the flesh, which removed the enmity between man and man, between Jew and Gentile, and removed the enmity between God and man. That's what the cross did. Christ became our peace because he removed something that was the enemy of peace. He removed something called the hostility, the enmity, and he did it through putting it to death in His body.

So just like everything else of Christ, peace is a finished work established by the cross, and it's an ever-increasing experience of the soul in the increase of Him, in the coming of His light.