

# GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

## Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide SB 11.28.2021

### FAVOR AND PEACE

#### Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

Colossae was a small town in the Lycus Valley some 100 miles east of Ephesus in the province of Asia. The Colossian church was an outgrowth of Paul's ministry in Ephesus. Although Paul never visited Colossae, Epaphras, who became a believer while visiting Ephesus from Colossae, later started the church there. Some 10 years later, Epaphras met with Paul who was in a Roman prison. Epaphras was worried his church was under attack by some destructive false teachings. In response, Paul wrote a letter to the Colossians resetting their ideas regarding who Christ was and who they were in Christ. Again and again, Paul underlined the central truth of all creation: Jesus Christ is Lord over all. He is the Lord over creation, the cosmos, spiritual powers, and human rulers with all their regulations. Paul also emphasized the divine favor and peace available for those who are in Christ. Let's get into our study.....

1. Your identification is important. Have you ever lost or misplaced an identification card? Describe the circumstance and how you felt when you tried to prove your identity.
2. Provide some attributes that describe who God is? Provide some attributes that describe who you are in Christ?
3. What stood out to you during this week's study?

#### Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

#### HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ COLOSSIANS 1:1-8

Paul addressed his letter to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are in Colossae. Saints and faithful brethren are two names given to Christians in the New Testament. Saints are those holy people who are uniquely separated for God's purpose. Because of Christ and the work completed on the cross, every Christian has the privilege of being called holy. Faithful brethren are the children of Father God. Every Christian has the privilege to be called a child of God as a result of having faith and receiving Jesus Christ as Lord. The outcome of this faith is a divine favor (grace) and a divine peace (Shalom) from the presence of God in our hearts by His Spirit. No two words could better embrace the blessing of Christianity more than grace and peace.

1. Every Christian has the privilege of being called holy. This means we are separated for God's purpose. Yet, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). How is that we can be called holy?
2. What does it mean to be separated for God's purpose?
3. Every Christian has the privilege to be called a child of God because of having faith and receiving Jesus Christ as Lord. As a result, we have divine favor. What is divine favor?
4. In your own words, describe what grace means to you.
5. It may seem our world is out of control, but everything is falling into place according to the will of God. How can Christians maintain divine peace in these trying times?

**HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EPHESIANS 1:1-14**

The phrase “in Christ” is found more than 130 times in Paul’s writings, 27 times in the book of Ephesians, and 14 of those times in the first chapter alone. God’s will is that our practice should correspond to our position “in Christ”. Therefore, saints should be saintly. Those “in Christ” have every spiritual blessing needed. Everything that touches our lives on earth – or our home in heaven, every blessing has been provided by the Father for His children in the heavenlies, for every good and perfect gift comes from the Father of lights (James 1:17). The God who put the stars, the sun, and the moon in their place. The God who is faithfully presiding over His children and providing everything good (Matt. 6:30, 7:11).

6. Our position “in Christ” is saints and faithful brethren. What are some practices that should correspond to our position?
7. Those “in Christ” have every spiritual blessing needed. How does this encourage you?
8. Every good and perfect gift comes from the Father. What are some good and perfect gifts given to you by the Father?
9. God has blessed us with a faith in Christ, love for all the saints, and hope stored up in heaven. How is this blessing foundational to our Christian walk?
10. Without Jesus, what hope is there for a lost world? (John 14:6, Rom. 6:23)

**Applying God’s Word**

**What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.**

Our Christian faith requires us to trust that God is who the Bible says He is and that we are who God says we are. God is the creator of the universe and everything within (Genesis 1:1, Psalm 33:6-9, Acts 14:15, Revelation 4:11), including mankind (Genesis 1:26-27, 5:1-2, Mark 10:5-6). We are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10). We are God’s holy ones, His saints. We are the faithful brethren, brothers and sisters who can call God our Father. We are “In Christ” and have His eternal divine favor (grace) and divine peace (Shalom) from the presence of God in our hearts by His Spirit.

1. Are there areas in your life that might not align with that of a saint? (Titus 2:11-13) What repenting steps will you take to correct this misalignment?
2. Are there areas in your life where you are not experiencing God’s divine peace? If so, ask the Holy Spirit to anoint you with divine peace and fill you with rivers of living Water.
3. We have a spiritual identity and a blessing in Christ, the Lord of all. This should embolden our spiritual walk. How can you better walk in this identity?

**PRAYER**

Lord, by Your Word, the heavens were made, the earth, the sea, and everything in them. You breathed life into us. You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they existed and were created. Thank You for creating us. Thank you for giving us an identity in You through the work of Jesus. You created us in Christ, to do good works. Help us to represent the sainthood well. Anoint us with Your divine peace and fill us with Your living Water.

*“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10)*