



## Meeting Notes: Ephesians 3: Grace and the Holy Spirit (January 25, 2017)

These notes capture our January 25, 2017 meeting. We opened our meeting in prayer and then began our evening. Topic notes may not be in the order discussed during group, and they are not intended to cover everything. They are intended as highlights to capture the essence of our evening. General notes follow each discussion topic. Documents used or created during this meeting are attached.

**Current Vision:** “2017 – The Year of Learning how to Walk: Putting on our Shoes of the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace”

**Scripture Reference:** Ephesians 2:10 – “For we are of God’s making, created in union with the Messiah Yeshua for a life of good actions already prepared by God for us to do” (CJB).

**Our approach to our study:** Since Ephesians is a letter, we are approaching it as a form of communication, which means, there’s a **messenger** (the apostle Paul), a **message** (what we’re seeking to discover), and an **audience** (the believers in Ephesus). Thus, we are looking at “What did the apostle Paul say?” and not “What does it mean to me?” This approach helps us put Scripture back into its proper context.

**Discussion Topic: Grace and the Holy Spirit.** Since the apostle Paul mentioned grace and the Spirit several times in Ephesians 3, we wanted to take a closer look at both these topics.

- **Examining the verses (NKJV).** We looked at specific instances where grace and/or the Spirit were referenced. Here are the points we captured:
  - **Dispensation of grace (v2):** Since we didn’t really understand what that meant, we looked in the CJB, which reads, “the work God in his grace has given me to do for your benefit.” We understood that better!
  - **As it has now been revealed by the Spirit (v5).** The Father’s grace and Spirit have released something through the apostle Paul. Likewise, the Father’s grace influenced the apostle Paul’s heart and His Spirit gave revelation.
  - **Grace is purposeful (v8).** The purpose of the Father’s grace was for the apostle Paul to “preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” (NKJV). Thus, when the Father pours out His grace, it’s for a reason! Some nuggets from this discussion are:
    - The Lord gave me grace. It transformed my heart. I became open to revelation. The Lord gave me revelation by the Spirit that He

wants me to let be known, and now I have chosen to obey.

- He can transform my heart. He can give me revelation, but it's up to me if I'm going to obey.
  - It's not just about getting the revelation; it's also about application.
  - When we don't obey, we don't understand the place we're in. In other words, we don't understand the soil of our heart. And, when we're out of place, it impacts others!
  - Even when we're in place, we don't necessarily see the ripple effect, so we never know how many people the Lord helps through us!
  - Had the apostle Paul not chosen to obey, not only would the Gentiles not have gotten that specific message, neither would we—thousands of years later we are benefitting from Paul's obedience!
- **Gift of grace (v7).** The apostle Paul became a minister “according to the gift of grace of God given to [him] by the effective working of His power.” Revelations from this discussion:
- His power is connected to His grace, which comes through His Spirit,
  - When we're paying His grace forward, we're working through His power and that's how His grace gets passed forward through us.
  - If we're trying to do good in our own power and not in His things get messed up!
  - God's grace working in the apostle Paul's life took him to his knees to pray.
  - Right after basically telling the Ephesians to not worry about him, he's able to pray for them because he wants them to understand the message he's sharing.
  - We can pray for anyone, anywhere. We don't have to know their names. The apostle Paul didn't know the names of those he was praying for!
- **Strength in the inner man (v16).** This strength has to come from the Father's Spirit—in the deep part of us.
- **His power working in us (v20).** Do we hinder the flow of the Father's grace, thereby hindering His power? We noted what's working in us

determines what comes out of us, and we can hinder that! After all, the good works we do are by His grace and the power He gives us, so it only makes sense the glory would go back to the One from whence the grace and power came from!

- **Benefits of the Father's grace and Holy Spirit.** We reexamined the width, depth, length, and height of Christ's love in relationship to the Father's grace and His Spirit.
  - **Width.** He's by my side!
  - **Depth.** How deep can His grace and love go to heal our wounds and uncover every treasure He has placed within us?
  - **Height.** How high can his grace and love elevate us?
  - **Length.** His grace and love can help us move forward!
  - **Takeaway.** Without His grace we have no love, no strength, no revelation, no power, nothing! We are barren without His grace!
- **Connecting the Dots.** We looked back at Ephesians 2:20 – “having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.” This verse connects to Ephesians 3:5, “revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets.” These two verses created the vision of building a house. God makes the plan. He tells the plan to the apostles and the prophets. They then share the plan with others to do the work.
- **Summing it up.** We looked how did grace and the Spirit impact the apostle Paul and what he was able to accomplish.
  - Feeding the person within gives one power – energy.
  - Grace is a benefit we get from having a relationship with the Lord.
  - He gives us grace to do what we have to do.
  - Grace changed the apostle Paul and the Spirit taught him.
  - We extend grace to others when they act out of character, but we choose to overlook their actions, because we know they have most likely been hit by one of the devil's arrows!
  - The Father sees everything! His wisdom has so many sides because He has no one filter. Because He sees everything, He knows it before we can even think it, and He wants those in heavenly places to get it, but the only way they get to see it is to see His plan carried out one step at a time— with “it” being His wisdom. Jesus was the first step! We're the continuing

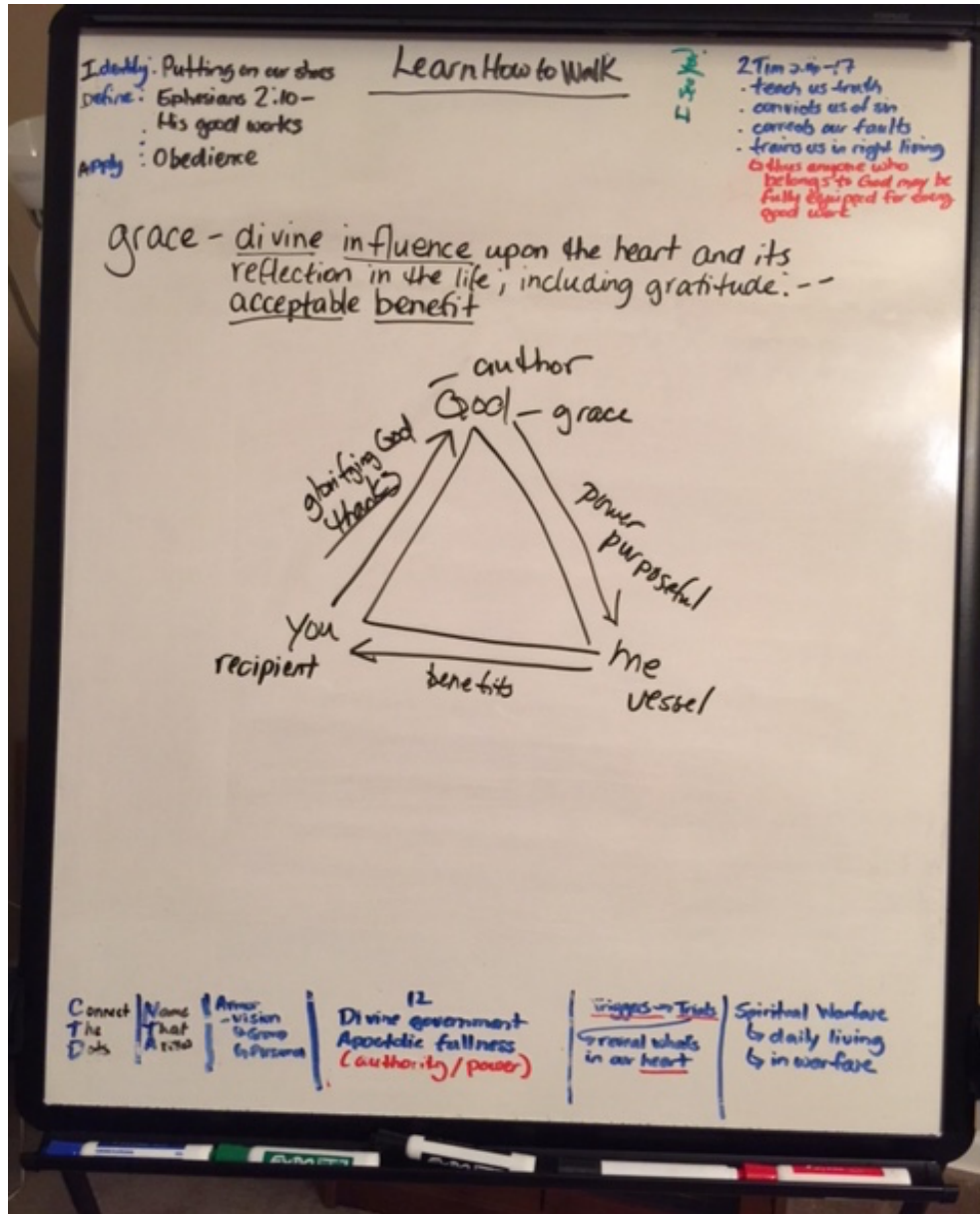
steps in His story!

**Next Meeting:** We will begin discussing Ephesians 4.

**Closing:** We closed our meeting in with a time of worship and need-specific prayer for the challenges that were lifted up, for the group overall, and as the Holy Spirit led.

*If you have questions, comments, or concerns about information contained in this document, or would like to be added to or removed from the email distribution for the meeting notes, please email us at [wow2@wow2women.com](mailto:wow2@wow2women.com) or complete a Contact Form on our site, [www.wow2women.com](http://www.wow2women.com).*

## ATTACHMENT: White Board on Grace<sup>1</sup>



**Note:** This illustration demonstrates how grace flows from God to us and then onto others! God gives His grace for a purpose. It flows to us as His vessel. We pour it out on others, and the Father is glorified in the process as we all give thanks!

<sup>1</sup> The concept of the grace being depicted in a triangle originally came from Karl D. Coke, *God is Charismatic* (Charlotte: Re-Direction Publications, 1983).