



Meeting Notes: The Year of Becoming (February 3, 2016)

These notes capture our February 3, 2016 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 discussed. They are intended as highlights to capture the essence of our evening. General notes follow each topic that was discussed. Documents used or created during this meeting are attached.

Current Vision: “2016 – The Year of Becoming Women of Worship Women of Witness”

Memory verse: Ephesians 6:11 – “Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (NKJV)

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

Discussion Topic: Grace and Peace

- **Examining Grace:** In looking at the original words translated “grace”, I found two in the Old Testament and one in the New (see attachment 1). Generally, all the words have to do with God’s favour in our lives, but we narrowed our examination to the word used throughout the New Testament: *charis*. By closely examining what *charis* means, we surmised: grace is “How your heart is influenced and how that emanates through you and/or from you, including gratitude, which is like thankfulness” (see attachment 2).
 - **Observations about Grace:**
 - **The messenger and his message.** In the New Testament, the word *grace* is used, almost exclusively, by the apostle Paul. This was not surprising, since several of Paul’s teachings, including Ephesians, were completed while he was in prison.
 - **The price of our free gift.** We know from Ephesians 1:6 God’s grace is a free gift to us; HOWEVER, our free gift COST Jesus, because our freedom FROM and forgiveness OF sin comes THROUGH His blood.
 - **Looking beyond favor.** Both the Old and New Testament words defined as “grace” point to God’s favor in our lives. However, since we didn’t see the word “unmerited” in the definitions, we looked

beyond whether or not we deserve God's grace to the impact it is to have on our lives. For example, when looking at Thayer's definition (see attachment 1), we saw ways God's grace emanates from us, such as acts of kindness in speech and deed that bring "joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, [and] loveliness" to our lives AND the lives of those around us.

- **Testimony.** One of our sisters shared how God's grace helped her be kind and show His love to some people in her sphere of influence that others consider "unlovable." As she described the joy she felt, we could all see how her acts of kindness blessed both her and those to whom she was kind. However, we also noted, being able to know, to recognize, and/or to acknowledge how God's grace moved in a situation can and might come at different times. For instance, she was not aware that was God's grace moving in her life until our discussion.
- **Summing up grace:** Grace is the favor God gives us that influences our heart so we can pour out His love on others!
- **Examining peace.**
 - **Defining peace.** We actually had a hard time understanding the definition for the original word translated "peace" (see attachment 3). It took a couple of demonstrations for us to understand what "+ set at one again" means.
 - **The torn paper.** I tore a piece of paper into two parts. It was "one," but now it was two. I used pieces of tape to demonstrate how peace sets (makes) the two pieces as one again. However, the tape distracted us, so we still saw the two pieces of paper separately.
 - **The broken vessel.** Kintsukuroi is the Japanese "art of repairing pottery with gold or silver lacquer and understanding that the piece is more beautiful for having been broken."¹ (see attachment 4). Since God is the potter and we are the clay, this example helped us see how His peace can help us become vessels of His grace. As He pours in and heals us, we can then pour out His love to others.
 - **Takeaway.** Peace makes it possible for that broken thing to be mended or for two things to be brought back together again for the purpose God intended.
 - **The two become one** (see attachment 5). We examined how the apostle

¹ Retrieved from <https://search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?p=kintsukuroi&ei=UTF-8&hspart=mozilla&hsimp=yhs-001>.

Paul demonstrated God implementing the two becoming one for His purpose. In v11, he refers to the Jews and/or the disciples as being the first to hope in Christ. In v13, he tells how the Gentiles heard the message, believed the message they heard, and were thereby included in Christ. We drew this equation out as the Jews + the Gentiles = Body of Christ. The two become one working together for the praise of His glory. Now, THAT'S peace!

- **Prosperity and peace.** In seeking to understand the connection between prosperity and peace, we looked at 3 John 1:2, "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers (NKJV). Some things we observed:
 - **Prosperity and growth.** Things that prosper are considered to be growing. For instance, financially, we prosper when we grow our income. Spiritually, we prosper when we grow our faith.
 - **Text message clarifying prosperity.** We didn't really get a good grasp on how prosperity and peace are connected during small group; however, I sent a text to those who had attended which helped bring some clarity: "Peace is linked to prosperity, because peace builds; it allows for increase. But a lack of peace brings destruction. Look at the devastation conflict and war brings!"
- **Three directions of peace.** As we often mentioned during our study on the armor of God, peace flows in three directions: with **God**, with **ourselves**, and with **others**. If we are to wear our shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace, we need peace in all three directions!
- **Summing up peace.** After close examination of the definition and much discussion, we concluded, peace "brings two things together to work together as one."
- **Understanding grace and peace together.** We concluded, "We have an abundance of grace that influences our heart to help us be peacemakers." As Scripture says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God" (Matthew 5:9 NKJV).

Homework: Our homework this week is three-fold:

- **Get to know our blessings.** I encourage everyone to get to know these blessings and allow them to become a part of your mind and your heart, so they can become a part of your life.
- **Continue to prayerfully examine our spiritual blessings and how they apply to your every day life.** For example, one of the things I shared from my notes last night was, "Knowing I have been redeemed—set free—makes me realize I

need to walk in that mindset and not still in bondage to my past. I'm free from that! Jesus bought me back from all the devil has done! Thank You, Jesus!!!!" I pray as you examine these blessings, the Holy Spirit will meet you at your point of need to help you grow in the grace God has given us!

- **Read through Ephesians 1:15-23.** Now that we've more closely examined the first 14 verses, hopefully, that will help you capture your observations and questions as you read our next section. While reading, please keep in mind the things we have already learned (for example, what we saw as our spiritual blessings and the meaning of "grace" and "peace").

Next Meeting: We'll discuss our homework assignment.

Closing: We closed our meeting in prayer with a time of 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 or complete a Contact Form on our site, www.wow2women.com.



ATTACHMENT 1: Grace Defined²

Strong's Definition

G5485. – Noun Feminine

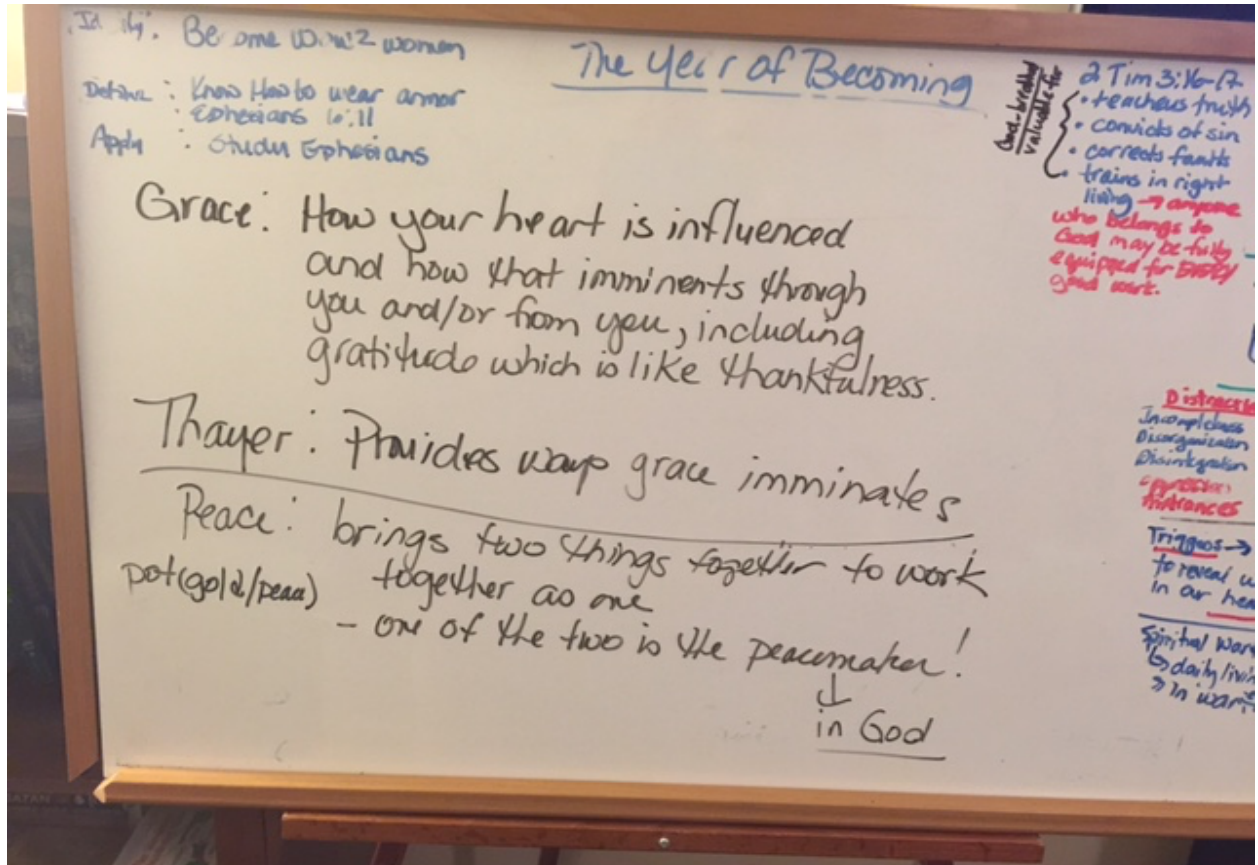
charis *khar'-ece* from 5463; graciousness (as gratifying), of manner or act (abstract or concrete; literal, figurative or spiritual; especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life; including gratitude):--acceptable, benefit, favour, gift, grace(-ious), joy, liberality, pleasure, thank(-s, -worthy).

Thayer's Definition

1. grace
 - a. that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech
2. good will, loving-kindness, favour
 - a. of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increase them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues
3. what is due to grace
 - a. the spiritual condition of one governed by the power of divine grace
 - b. the token or proof of grace, benefit
 1. a gift of grace
 2. benefit, bounty
4. thanks, (for benefits, services, favours), recompense, reward

² Definitions retrieved from Tecarta Bible Apps, Strong's with KJV, Version 7.2, iOS7.1, 2016,

ATTACHMENT 2: Whiteboard – Grace and Peace



ATTACHMENT 3: Peace Defined³

Strong's Definition

G1515. – Noun Feminine

eirene *i-ray'-nay* probably from a primary verb eiro (to join); peace (literally or figuratively); by implication, prosperity:--one, peace, quietness, rest, + set at one again.

Thayer's Definition

1. a state of national tranquility
 - a. exemption from the rage and havoc of war
2. peace between individuals, i.e. harmony, concord
3. security, safety, prosperity, felicity, (because peace and harmony make and keep things safe and prosperous)
4. of the Messiah's peace
 - a. the way that leads to peace (salvation)
5. of Christianity, the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is.
6. the blessed state of devout and upright men after death

³ Definitions retrieved from Tecarta Bible Apps, Strong's with KJV, Version 7.2, iOS7.1, 2016,

ATTACHMENT 4: Kintsukori



Kintsugi (Japanese: golden joinery) or **Kintsukuroi** (Japanese: golden repair)

is the Japanese art of fixing broken pottery with gold, silver, or platinum, speaking to breakage and repair becoming a part of the history of an object, rather than something to disguise. Metaphorically and spiritually speaking, we can become quite beautiful after being broken.

SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA

ATTACHMENT 5: Whiteboard - The Two Become One

Identity: Be one like 2 women

Define: Know how to wear armor
Ephesians 6:11

Apply: Study Ephesians

The Year of Becoming

2 Tim 3:16-17

- teaches truth
- convicts of sin
- corrects faults
- trains in right living → anyone who belongs to God may be fully equipped for every good work.

Identify
Define
Apply

Connect
The
Dots

Armor
Vision
Group
Personal

v11 Jews = 1st to put hope in Christ

v13 Gentiles = heard the message & believed
+ as a result were included
in Christ

= Body of Christ

Two become one — working together
for the praise of His glory

Peace

Distractions!!

Incompleteness	Loneliness
Disorganization	Disorder
Disregard	The Believer
<u>Procrastination</u>	<u>Attractions</u>
<u>Interferences</u>	<u>Lack focus</u>

Triggers → Trials
to reveal what's
in our hearts

Spiritual Warfare
↳ daily living
↳ in warlike