

2 Timothy 1:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Analysis

To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. Paul addresses Timothy with exceptional tenderness using *agapētō tekno* (ἀγαπητῷ τέκνῳ), "beloved child." This surpasses even the warmth of 1 Timothy 1:2, reflecting their deepened relationship forged through fifteen years of ministry partnership and shared suffering. The adjective *agapētos* (ἀγαπητός) expresses covenant love—unconditional, self-sacrificial love characterizing Paul's fatherly affection.

The threefold greeting "grace, mercy, and peace" (*charis, eleos, eirēnē, χάρις, ἔλεος, εἰρήνη*) exceeds typical salutations. *Charis* (grace) denotes God's unmerited favor—the foundation of salvation. *Eleos* (mercy) emphasizes God's compassion toward the helpless, particularly relevant for Timothy's struggles. *Eirēnē* (peace) signifies wholeness, reconciliation with God, inner tranquility despite external chaos—Hebrew *shalom* made possible through Christ.

These blessings flow "from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord"—placing Christ on equal standing with the Father as the source of divine grace, affirming Christ's deity. The title "our Lord" (*tou kyriou hēmōn, τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν*) claims Christ's absolute authority, demanding total allegiance above all earthly powers.

Historical Context

The spiritual father-son relationship between Paul and Timothy spanned approximately fifteen years. Timothy likely converted during Paul's first missionary journey to Lystra (Acts 14), where his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois had already believed. Paul recruited Timothy during his second journey (Acts 16:1-3), and Timothy became his most trusted coworker. In ancient honor-shame culture, having a renowned spiritual father like Paul provided Timothy with significant social capital and authority, especially crucial when facing opposition from those who questioned his youth and legitimacy.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Who are the spiritual fathers or mothers who have shaped your faith, and whom are you intentionally mentoring as a spiritual son or daughter?
2. How do grace, mercy, and peace from God practically sustain you in current struggles, fears, or opposition?
3. What does confessing Jesus as "our Lord" mean for your daily decisions when they conflict with cultural expectations?

Interlinear Text

Τιμοθέω ἀγαπητῷ τέκνῳ χάρις ἔλεος εἰρήνη ἀπὸ¹
To Timothy my dearly beloved son Grace mercy and peace from
G5095 G27 G5043 G5485 G1656 G1515 G575

θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν
God the Father and Christ Jesus Lord our
G2316 G3962 G2532 G5547 G2424 G3588 G2962 G2257

Additional Cross-References

2 Timothy 2:1 (Grace): Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 1:2 (Grace): Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

Acts 16:1 (Parallel theme): Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:

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