

For those of you who have been a part of our KMC Ohana and have been going through our series on the gifts of the Spirit, I will soon be posting some videos to finish the last 3 parts of that series. I didn't want to finish that series with so many new people joining us I didn't want them to come in right at the end of a series with no context.

So, I'm starting a new series with a new framework and structure. I'll be teaching for about 20 minutes and then will provide discussion questions so that everyone can talk story about what they are hearing and learning.

We are going to start by going through the book of Ephesians.

The book of Ephesians can be broken down into two main sections:

- 1) God's plan for mankind in context of community -- Chapters 1-3
- 2) How we walk out God's plan as a part of His community - Chapters 4-6

So, as we go through this book of the Bible, remember these two main thoughts.

We'll be examining the book of Ephesians in a way that gives us more than just information about the Bible - we will explore ways to put what we learn into practice.

Let's start in Chapter 1 verse 1

***Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,  
To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus:***

A guy named Paul wrote this letter to a group of people who lived in a town called Ephesus. You can google information about all of this and how instrumental Ephesus was as a strategic city back in the day.

If you study the life of Paul, you'll see that he had a very adventurous and full life. He did amazing things for God. It seems like Paul had a clear idea of his identity in Christ and His purpose in God's plan.

We each have a purpose in God's plan. If we can begin to grasp our identity and purpose in Him, we too can be more effective.

The Bible clearly teaches that each of us were created for a purpose. We aren't just here by accident. We don't just exist to make ends meet and "live to fight another day". We are an intentional part of His plan and He is aware and attentive concerning us.

Let's look at a few verses that talk about this:

**Psalm 139:13-18** *For You formed my inward parts;  
You wove me in my mother's womb.*

*14 I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
Wonderful are Your works,  
And my soul knows it very well.*

*15 My frame was not hidden from You,  
When I was made in secret,  
And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth;*

*16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance;  
And in Your book were all written  
The days that were ordained for me,  
When as yet there was not one of them.*

*17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God!  
How vast is the sum of them!*

*18 If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand.  
When I awake, I am still with You.*

**Ephesians 2:10** *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

***2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.***

Many people don't understand grace. Most people yearn for peace. We'll talk more about grace and peace later in Ephesians, but for right now let's focus on an important truth in this verse:

True, rich, and deep grace and peace come from God our Father and Jesus Christ.

My definition of grace is anything and everything that God does in, around, and through us to get us from Point A to Point B.

My definition of His peace goes beyond the absence of conflict, challenge, and/or chaos - it is an anchored calm and stability in the midst of conflict, challenge and/or chaos.

There are many ways people try to navigate from Point A to Point B. They'll pursue education, rely on ability, and/or rest on achievement.

Some folks try to achieve peace through a variety of mental exercises and/or a wide range of escapes.

True Grace and Peace can only come from Him. When things are going relatively well, we can try to create the illusion that we have the ability to navigate ourselves through life and that we can achieve peace through our own abilities

and efforts. Something like we are facing now with the COVID19 situation brings the truth that we are not in control to the forefront very quickly.

I think of two verses that give us a practical way to embrace His Grace and Peace, no matter what the circumstances are around us.

**Matthew 11:28-30** *“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.<sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*

**Philippians 4:6,7** *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

**<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love <sup>5</sup> He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.**

These verses describe the amazing love that God has for us. His plan A has always been to have an intimate and ongoing relationship with us.

Before God created everything on the planet, Jesus was already set apart to be the “Lamb to be slain for us” – a perfect sacrifice to pay for our sins.

**Revelation 13:8** *All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb’s book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.*

He draws us, He chooses us to be His children, we need to respond to His call.

**John 6:44** *No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.*

**John 15:16** *You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.*

**Romans 10:9-13** *that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; <sup>10</sup> for with the*

*heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. <sup>11</sup> For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed." <sup>12</sup> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; <sup>13</sup> for "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

His eternal desire is that everyone relinquishes control of their lives to Christ and becomes Born-again...though many will not.

**2 Peter 3:9** *The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.*

**Matthew 7:13,14** *Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. <sup>14</sup> For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

The question for us is simple, "Based on His deep desire to have relationship with us, based on His loving design and intentionality concerning our very existence, based on His overwhelming offer for Grace and Peace – what are we going to do about it?"

Let's pray...E Pule Kakou

### **Discussion Questions**

- 1) What are your thoughts about your purpose on this planet?
- 2) Have you been able to discover why God created you and placed you here?
- 3) What are the ways you have tried to navigate through life and find peace?
- 4) Based on today's teaching, what can you alter in daily practice to align yourself to God's plan for Grace and Peace in your life?
- 5) Describe your thoughts concerning the fact that God wants to draw you into a more intimate relationship with you.
- 6) How have you responded to His invitation to come to Him and relinquish control of your life to Him?
- 7) If you are a Jesus Follower already, what do you feel the Father is calling you to surrender to Him?

8) If you have not relinquished control of your life to Jesus yet, what are some of the things keeping you from taking that step of faith?

9) What are some things we can pray with you about?