

Sabbath School Lesson #13 – Grace, Love, and Fellowship – 19-25 September 2026

Christ who breathed on His disciples saying, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22), wants us to receive the same “Spirit of Christ” for “It is not safe to catch the spirit from another. We want the Holy Spirit, which is Jesus Christ” {9LtMs, Lt 66, 1894, par. 18}.

The memory text for this lesson reads: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen” (2 Corinthians 13:14). ‘Aha,’ you say, ‘Paul is making a trinitarian greeting or benediction!’ Not so fast, please. We are to compare scripture with scripture (Isaiah 28:10)! To this as trinitarian is inconsistent with other Paul’s writings. Read the greetings of Paul and note the emphasis to Father/Son.

It must be first noted that 2 Corinthians 13:14 is not a classical benediction greeting of Paul. The classical benediction of Paul (and others) can be found in the introduction of the epistles where the consistent greeting is along these lines “Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:3) – see also Romans 1:7; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:2; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 1:3; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 John 1:3. Returning to 2 Corinthians 13:14, the text speaks of: (1) The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ; (2) The love of God; and (3) The communion of the Holy Ghost. In this verse the title God is used only once and it is used in reference to a specific person. Obviously, it is God the Father whose love is spoken of in this verse, and, according to John 3:16, He loves us so much that He gave His only begotten Son to give grace to us that we can be drawn into communion with them both (Father and Son) through their Spirit.

Ephesians 2:18 “For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” Jesus said, “If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23). How will the Father and the Son be with us and in us? “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16). Please observe that Paul did not say we would commune *with* the Holy Ghost, but he speaks “of the communion of the Holy Ghost.” What does he mean by this? When Paul spoke of the communion of the Holy Ghost, he was showing how our communion would be. It would be by the means of the Holy Spirit that we would commune or have fellowship with God and Jesus Christ. 1 John 1:3 states, “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” According to John, we have fellowship with the Father and with His Son, through the Holy Spirit. Paul wanted this experience to remain with the Christians in Corinth and also with us today, an experience of true fellowship with the Father and with His Son through their Holy Spirit.

Let us read thirteen greetings of Paul. (1) Romans 1:7 “To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (2) 1 Corinthians 1:3 “Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” (3) 2 Corinthians 1:2 “Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” (4) Galatians 1:3 “Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.” (5) Ephesians 1:2 “Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” (6) Philippians 1:2; 4:19-20 “Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” “And my God shall supply all your need according to *His* riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.” (7) Colossians 1:2-3 “To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you.” (8) 1 Thessalonians 1:1 “Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (9) 2 Thessalonians 1:2 “Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (10) 1 Timothy 1:2 “Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.” (11) 2 Timothy 1:2 “To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ

Jesus our Lord.” (12) Titus 1:4 “To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.” (13) Philemon 1:3 “Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Now read Paul’s prayer. 2 Corinthians 13:14 “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.” Communion is the result of the love of God and the grace of Christ, who give to us their holy Spirit. Paul makes reference to Christ, and God, and the Holy Spirit. If by God, he means the Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), then Christ and the Holy Spirit are mentioned twice and the Father only once. If by God he means the Father, then we can say that God is our Father in heaven. God Our Father gave His Son and sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts (Galatians 4:6). The indwelling of “Spirit of His Son” results in communion among believers.

Notice that thirteen times Paul greeted believers in the name of the Father and His Son. Once he prayed that the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Spirit would be with the believers. If God is a trinity, Paul ignored one-third of trinity thirteen times!

Sunday: The Grace of Jesus – Paul believed in the grace of Jesus. Paul says, “The grace of Jesus Christ be with your spirit” (Philemon 1:25). In these last days, when the National Sunday Law is enacted in the United States and other countries, many Adventists will accept Sunday worship, except the few Adventists who unswervingly remain faithful and obedient to the commandments of God through the enabling grace of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Monday: The Love of God – Referring to 2 Corinthians 13:14, the Lesson writer says Paul “mentions the three Persons of the Trinity...” – yet as we examine the verse, we see Paul mentions only one God. Though the grace of Jesus and communion of the holy ghost are mentioned, neither of these is referred to as God. It is only the Father that is called God.

Tuesday: The God of Love – Again, the Lesson writer refers to 2 Corinthians 13:14 and says here Paul “thinks of God as three Person”. Paul never taught that God was three gods. Paul taught, “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him” (1 Corinthians 8:6).

Wednesday: The Fellowship of the Holy Spirit – The phrase “fellowship of the Spirit” (Philippians 2:1) means fellowship granted by, or through, the Spirit of God and not a false fellowship with the Spirit itself as the third God. John explains to us with whom we are to have fellowship. He says, “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3). Surely if John were acquainted with a third God, he would want us to have fellowship with him as well, but there is no mention of another being. Paul declared, “I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels” (1 Timothy 5:21). Paul called the heavenly agencies to witness this charge given to Timothy. Notice who Paul called as a witness for him: God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are naturally the first ones to be mentioned, but Paul did not stop here; he called all the angels of God to be his witnesses also. Certainly, if Paul knew of a third being who is co-equal with the Father and His Son, then he would have mentioned him in this verse. Yet there is no hint of another divine being, which is plain evidence that Paul knew nothing about a third God.

Thursday: Our Triune God – The Lesson writer says that Paul ends the letter with “a promise that the three Dignitaries of the universe, the heavenly Trio, would be with us now and in the age to come.” On Friday section quotes: “there are three living persons of the heavenly trio ... the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” – Ellen G. White, *Evangelism*, p. 615.” ‘Aha,’ you say, ‘trinity!’ Not so fast please. *Evangelism* is not an original Ellen G White book, but a Compilation done in 1946 long after her death, by LeRoy Edwin Froom, in some cases using half-quotations, words omitted and disjointed from their original context to support a trinitarian view. To fully understand what Ellen White taught, compare her other writings, for “the testimonies themselves will be the key that will explain the messages given, as scripture is explained by scripture” {18LtMs, Lt 73, 1903, par. 7}. Read her writings about the Godhead; to help you, download a booklet by Nader Mansour (http://revelation1412.org/files/1413/4269/9545/Putting_the_Pieces_Together.pdf) and read the full quotations; you will be amazed to find clearly that Ellen White was never a trinitarian!