

PRESCRIPT FOR LIFE (PART 3)

— CHRISTUS VICTOR WEEK 4 —

Colossians 1:1-2 (NIV)

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus
by the will of God,
and Timothy our brother,

² To God's holy people in Colossae,
the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

I. OUR FOUNDATION

¹ Paul,
an apostle of Christ Jesus
by the will of God,
and Timothy our brother,

II. OUR STATUS

² To God's holy people in Colossae,
the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ:

- (1) ...and Timothy our brother,
(2) ...from God our Father.

III. OUR _____

(2) Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

IV. OUR _____

(2) ...the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ:

THE BOTTOM LINE

_____ God's _____ with _____

...by _____ that the _____ your patron,
displayed in Christ, _____ a _____ you.

...by regularly _____ patron for his _____ you.

...by _____ God your patron in _____ of his _____.

...by staying _____ (_____/_____) to God your patron.

...by _____ God your patron.

Ungraceful Responses to God's Grace

(David DeSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship, & Purity*, 149)

The Christian Scriptures also present the danger of failing to attain God's gift (Heb 12:15), of "receiving God's gift in vain" (2 Cor 6:1, my translation). Just as living out a response of gratitude assures the believer of God's favor in the future, so responding to God's favor with neglect, ingratitude or even contempt threatens to make one "fall from favor" (Gal 5:4, my translations), resulting in the danger of exclusion from future benefactions. When attempting to dissuade their audiences from a particular course of action, the New Testament authors show the hearers how such a course of action is inconstant with the obligations of gratitude and how such a course threatens to turn the affronted patron's favor into wrath.

In effect, refusal or neglect of the sorts of acts described above as constituting a response demonstrating gratitude would mean that the recipient of priceless favors broke the circle of grace and brought the dance to a strident halt. Disowning Jesus (Mt 10:32-33), failing to honor God or return reverence (Rom 1:21; Rev 9:20-21; 16:9, 11), failing to use God's gifts for their intended purposes (Rom 2:4-5; Jude 4), showing distrust toward God or Jesus, faltering, rather than acting on their promises (Gal 1:6; 2:21; 5:2-4; Heb 3:12, 19; Jas 1:6-7), showing disloyalty by making alliances with God's enemies (Jas 4:4; Rev 14:9-11), and responding to the divine patron's call for service with disobedience (Heb 3:18-19), such as brings God's name into dishonor (Rom 2:17-24), are all ugly and unsuitable courses of action in light of the generosity and favor God has lavished upon the Christians. Such actions show gross forgetfulness of these benefits and provoke God by meeting his favor and kindness with insult and abuse.