

GRACE AND TRUTH—WE NEED BOTH

(No. 1213 – 12/6/21 – Sermon Online Zoom)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. **John 1:14-17:** ¹⁴*The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, **full of grace and truth.*** ¹⁵*John testifies concerning Him. He cries out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has surpassed me because He was before me.’”* ¹⁶*From **the fullness of His grace** we have all received one blessing after another.* ¹⁷*For the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth** came through Jesus Christ.*
- B. Grace and truth seem to be opposites, but in Christ, both find full expression, and BOTH are needed in our lives
1. Grace [Gk. *charis* = favor, kindness, graciousness, blessing, generosity, giving gifts]
 2. Truth [Gk. *alētheia* = true, truly, certainly, rightly]
- C. We often tend toward one extreme or the other—some are kind and nice but compromise truth; others go strictly by the book, rigidly standing for the truth without any grace or compassion—neither of these extremes is healthy or godly.
- D. We should avoid extremes and excesses in our spiritual life:
- Eccl. 7:16-18 (NAS):** ¹⁶*Do not be **excessively righteous** and do not be **overly wise.** Why should you ruin yourself?* ¹⁷*Do not be **excessively wicked** and do not be a fool. Why should you die before your time?* ¹⁸***It is good that you grasp one thing and also not let go of the other;** for the one who fears God comes forth with both of them* [“will **avoid all extremes**” NIV].
- E. Jesus was full of grace and truth—He desires the same for each one of us.

II. EXAMPLES IN SCRIPTURE

- A. What seem to us to be opposite traits (like grace and truth) are actually two different facets of the same jewel of God’s divine nature. Consider the following...

B. Mercy and truth, righteousness and peace:

Ps. 85:9-11 (NKJV): ⁹*Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him, that glory may dwell in our land.* ¹⁰***Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed.*** ¹¹*Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.*

C. Mercy and judgment:

James 2:10-13: ¹⁰*For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.* ¹¹*For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.* ¹²*Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom,* ¹³***because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!***

D. Grace and righteousness in the Gospel:

Rom 1:16-17: ¹⁶*I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.* ¹⁷***For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”***

Rom. 3:21-26: ²¹*But now a **righteousness** from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.* ²²*This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,* ²³*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,* ²⁴*and are **justified freely by His** grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.* ²⁵*God presented Him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in His blood. He did this to **demonstrate His justice**, because in His forbearance He had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—* ²⁶***He did it to demonstrate His justice at the present time, so as to be just and the One who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.***

E. Kindness and severity:

Rom. 11:17-22 (NAS): ¹⁷*But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the*

olive tree, ¹⁸do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹You will say then, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. **Do not be conceited, but fear;** ²¹for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. ²²Behold then the kindness [“goodness” KJV] and severity [Gk. *apotomia* = “sharpness, to act abruptly; “sternness” NIV] of God; **to those who fell, severity, but to you, God’s kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.**

1. Is God kind and merciful, or severe and stern? Yes—He is both! Don’t take God’s grace, mercy, and kindness for granted!
2. God forgave King David’s horrible sins of adultery and murder (kindness) but tore the kingdom away from King Saul for disobeying a few simple orders (severity).
3. Peter denied Christ three times and yet was restored as the lead apostle in the Early Church (mercy); Ananias and Sapphira kept back part of the money from an offering for themselves and were instantly killed in the church! (severity).

III. BE FILLED WITH GRACE AND TRUTH

A. Grace

1. Faith in Christ gives us access into the abundance of God’s grace:

Rom. 5:1-2:

¹Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom **we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.** And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

2. **Acts 20:32:** Now I commit you to God and to the **Word of His grace**, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.
3. Find grace at the throne of grace (Heb. 4:16)

4. Be filled with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Grace (Heb. 10:29)
5. Grow in grace (2 Pet. 3:18)
6. Minister by grace and minister grace to others (Acts 4:33; 6:8; 1 Cor. 15:10)

B. Truth

1. Study and learn God's Word, the Word of Truth—know the truth! (John 8:31-32; 17:17; Eph. 1:13)
2. Allow the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth to teach us and lead us into all truth (John 16:7-13)
3. Love the truth, buy the truth, develop strong convictions about the truth

IV. CONCLUSION

- A. Avoid extremes in the spiritual life
- B. Ask God to keep grace and truth in proper balance—don't compromise either—we need to be filled with both!