

The Lights of Christmas

Part 3: The Light of **Grace and Truth**

John 1:1-17

Jesus is **Eternal** vs. 1-5

Jesus was both **UNANTICIPATED** and **EXCLUDED** vs. 6-12
Malachi 3:1, 4:5; Daniel 9:25; Micah 5:2

Jesus put on **HUMANITY** vs. 14-15

Jesus, being God, is **FULL** of both **GRACE** and **TRUTH**
vs. 14,16-17; Ex. 33:18-19, 34:5-6; John 8:1-11

Full of **GRACE** = *gracious, merciful, loving, forgiving, compassionate*

Full of **TRUTH** = *faithful to truth, always truthful*

To reveal His Glory Jesus was a **GRACIOUS TRUTH TELLER**

TRUTH w/out GRACE = Repels people, Creates a belligerent faith

GRACE w/out TRUTH = allows people to become trapped in sin

We are the recipients of **GRACE** vs. 16-18

We all have **DRUNK** from the wellspring of Grace; *'grace upon grace'*
Romans 5:2

Two **RESPONSES** to Grace:

HUMBLE repentance (Romans 2:4)

Take **ADVANTAGE** (Romans 6:1)

Life Group Discussion Questions – December 24, 2023

John 1:15-17 ...'He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.' For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

DISCOVER

1. What is meant that "by Jesus we have all received grace upon grace"? What are the implications in our lives as a result?
2. Does Jesus' grace displace the Law of Moses (truth)? How are grace and truth connected?
3. God didn't become flesh ("put on skin") simply to give us an example of grace and truth. How did Jesus actually save us in grace and truth? What is God's purpose to save us explicitly by grace and truth?
4. Why is it difficult to give grace in all circumstances? Should we withhold truth if we if we can't speak it in grace?

EXPLORE

1. The Apostle John does not begin his gospel narrative like the three synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke). What characters and subplots are missing from the other gospels? How does the Gospel of John impact the traditional Christmas Story?
2. How did God reveal His glory by coming in the flesh as Immanuel, "God with us"? How is God's glory more than a physical manifestation or an ecstatic feeling that overwhelms you? Why is it important to see and understand God's glory? (see Acts 20:32)
3. Read Exodus 33:18-19. What did God mean when He referred to "all His goodness"? Why did God answer Moses by showing him His goodness and not His glory?
4. It has been said that we can never "out-sin" God's grace. Is this truth? Are there any pitfalls to this idea? Explain. (see Romans 5:20 to 6:4)
5. Read Matthew 5:17-20. Where do you see in this passage that Jesus is a gracious truth-teller? How would Jesus' fulfilling of the Law of Moses bring glory to God?

EXPERIENCE

1. John the Baptist was a forerunner of the Messiah. What does a forerunner do? How did the baptisms of John prepare the way for Jesus? How are you doing as a forerunner of Christ?
2. In Jesus' day, the Jews had the knowledge that a forerunner would precede the Messiah, the knowledge of the exact year the Messiah would be born and even the knowledge of where He would be born. Yet, they missed His advent. Why do you think that is? Will His second advent take the world by surprise? Don't we have similar knowledge that the Jews had? Explain.
3. A friend might tell you, "I had a bad experience at church, so I don't go anymore." Without knowing the specifics, what might you infer about the role of grace and truth in your friend's circumstance? What happens when we over-extend grace? When we over-emphasize truth?
4. If we truly receive a daily and full measure of God's mercy, grace and forgiveness, how should we respond? What has been holding you back? How can your Life Group help you?

PRAY

Pray...Father God, we thank You that Your lovingkindness never ceases; that Your compassions never fail; that they are renewed every day. Great is Your faithfulness, O God. Your grace and mercy nourishes and blesses us. Help us to receive Your glory in humility and repentance; that we might truly die to sin once and for all and no longer live in it. Thank You for redeeming us and then never leaving or forsaking us. Your grace overwhelms us for we are unworthy. Amen.