

## **Wellspring – Life & Teaching of Jesus (42) Grace and Truth (John 1:14-18)**

*John 1:14-18*

*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. 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.'" From the fulness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No-one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.*

### **The Great Contrast**

In these few verses, John summarises what Jesus came to bring under the New Covenant and in v17 he contrasts this with the old covenant that came in under Moses. *"For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."*

The Old Covenant was based around the law. The law was good, it was righteous – it was the truth. It carried the promise of great blessing and success to everyone who lived according to its precepts (see Deut 28). However the Old Covenant – the law – did not carry within it any power or ability to enable people to fulfil it and to live in the good of the truth it declares.

The new Covenant does not do away with the law – Jesus made it quite clear in the Sermon on the Mount that he did not come to abolish the law and the prophets but to fulfil them (*Matt 5:17*). When Jeremiah prophesied about the New Covenant he said that under this New Covenant God would take the law and write in onto our hearts (*Jer 31:33*). The law, which had proved impossible for the people of the Old Testament to keep, would now become a matter of the heart rather than an external set of rules and regulations.

This is where the grace of God comes in.

**Grace is the empowering Presence of God enabling you to be who He created you to be, and to do what He has called you to do.**

Grace means that God does not merely tell me the truth – he does not merely arm me with the knowledge of what is required to please Him (the law), but he empowers me to do what pleases Him. We need to know the truth – but under the New Covenant the truth carries with it the power to enable me to live in that truth.

### **Grace and Truth**

Truth is rooted in the word of God. He is the source of all truth – and Jesus came to this world as the living "Word" – the embodiment of the truth of God in flesh and blood. He was the truth.

*I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)*

Knowing the truth is not an intellectual thing – it is a knowledge that is born out of relationship – something else that lies at the heart of the new covenant – "they shall all know me from the least to the greatest." We get to know the truth by coming into a relationship with a person, Jesus Christ, who is the truth.

*If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. (John 8:31-32 NKJV)*

There is no freedom without first knowing the truth. Knowing the truth comes through "abiding in His word" (The NIV rendering of "holding to his teaching" does not carry the same sense) – abiding means living your life in one place, positioning your heart to hear and to receive everything that he is saying – reading and meditating on his written word and having an open ear to hear his spoken word.

We have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit – the Spirit of truth - to lead us into the knowledge and experience of the truth.

*But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. (John 16:13-14)*

The Holy Spirit is also the Spirit of Grace (Heb 10:29) He is the one who bring the grace of God into our lives.

### **The place of faith**

We enter in “by grace through faith”

*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. (Eph 2:8-10)*

Even our faith is the gift of God. We receive faith from God - Jesus said to his disciples “have the faith of God” (Mark 11:22 lit). Once I see the truth, I need to declare it and receive faith from God to believe it.

*“The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (Rom 10:8-9)*

### **Humility**

God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble (*Jas 4:6, 1 Pet 5:5*)

It’s only as we realise and acknowledge our need of God, that we can receive his power and grace.

### **The truth of the scripture is already yours**

You don’t need to ask for what is already yours – you need to see it, receive it and walk in it.

Eg freedom from sin – love peace, joy – rest – freedom from stress and striving – in fact every spiritual blessing.

### **Enter into the truth**

**See it** – the truth is revealed to me by the Holy Spirit – often as I read and meditate upon the word of God.

**Want it** – come in humility to receive grace and faith from God

**Declare it** – speak out the truth in faith

**Believe it** – I ask for and receive faith from God

**Walk in it** - I experience the truth in my life