

“Full of Grace and Truth”  
John 1:14, 16-17  
(Preached at Trinity, September 7, 2016)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. For several Wednesday evenings we've restricted our focus to **Verse 14**. I stated earlier that it is a wellspring of truth that we could spend the rest of our days pondering and still not exhaust the wealth of truth.
2. John declares the incarnation of Christ.
  - A. John writes, "And the Word became flesh" –  
The eternal, unchanging God took upon Himself flesh and blood.
    1. Jesus is both God and man
    2. Jesus Christ is not the union of two persons; but the union of two natures in one person – Jesus was fully God and fully man in one person.
  - B. Then we read, "and dwelt among us" – The eternal God who has taken upon Him human flesh has condescended to enter into our condition by dwelling among us.
  - C. In the second half of **Verse 14** John takes us up to an even higher plain. John wants us to be clear that the human Christ is one with the Divine Christ. This is the grand mystery. The humanity of Christ and the deity of Christ make up the one person. So when looking upon the person of Christ we behold the glory of God in bodily form. John writes: "and we saw His glory"
  - D. John further describes the nature of the second person of the Godhead by saying, "glory as of the only begotten from the Father" – The eternal Son is eternally generated from the Father.  
LBC – 2:3 – “The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son. . .”
3. As we come to the end of this verse John declares the fullness of Christ – "full of grace and truth."
  - A. All fullness is in Christ. In **Verse 16** John declares that we have received this fullness. He uses the word *πλήρωμα* - "For of His fullness we have all received"
  - B. Paul describes this fullness of Christ in **Colossians**  
**Colossians 1:18-19 NAU** - "He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. <sup>19</sup> For it was the *Father's* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him"  
**Colossians 2:9 NAU** - "For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,"
4. At the end of **Verse 14** John describes this fullness in terms of grace and truth. What is meant by “full of grace and truth”

- I. John is strongly relating “grace and truth” to the work of Christ in the Gospel
- A. In **Verse 17** he contrasts the Law with the Gospel  
 "For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ."
1. The Law is excellent. It reflects God’s holy character. The Law is worthy of our praise and our contemplation. David declared:  
**Psalm 119:97 KJV** - "O how love I thy law! it *is* my meditation all the day."  
**Psalm 119:127 KJV** - "I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold."
  2. But the Law offers no mercy. It contains no grace. It makes no provision for keeping it. It only makes the demand of perfect obedience.  
**James 2:10 NAU** - "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one *point*, he has become guilty of all."
  3. The Law functions to declare us Lawbreakers. It declares our helplessness to keep it.  
**Romans 7:7 NAU** - "What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "You shall not covet."
- B. Through Christ we find grace, the fullness of grace.
1. Grace and truth belong to Christ. They are a part of His essential glory. Grace flows forth from Christ.  
**Romans 5:20-21 NAU** - "The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, <sup>21</sup> so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
  2. John wants us to understand that Jesus is the fullness of the Gospel. By contrasting Christ with the Law John isn’t rejecting the Law or placing any deficiency upon the Law. He is merely describing Jesus as the fulfillment of the Law.  
**Romans 8:3 NAU** - "For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God *did*: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as *an offering* for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh"
  3. Jesus Christ is the full display of God’s grace.  
 Christ is abundant in grace  
**John 1:16 NAU** - "For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace."
  4. There is a common grace that all men enjoy -  
 Life, health, prosperity, knowledge, family, friendships, pleasure. God is gracious towards humanity who deserve nothing but His wrath.
  5. But Jesus gives particular grace for His Bride – saving grace.  
 Forgiveness and reconciliation through the Gospel of Christ.

II. Jesus is also the fullness of all truth - "full of grace and truth."

A. Truth is an important concept in John's Gospel

1. This is the first of 26 times John uses the word truth in this Gospel.  
**John 4:23 NAU** - "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers."
2. John isn't saying that the Law was not truth. It *is* truth. The Law displays God's holy character. It announces God's demands upon humanity. By the Law is the knowledge of sin. But the Law did not teach God's grace. It did not teach a means of keeping it nor of a way to remove the guilt of breaking it. The one who broke it died without mercy.  
John wants us to understand that Jesus is the grand display of truth. Jesus Christ IS truth.  
**John 8:32 NAU** - "and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."  
**John 14:6 NAU** - "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

B. Jesus Christ is the epitome of truth – He is the fullness of God's revelation

1. This is one aspect of Jesus Christ as the Divine Logos  
**Hebrews 1:1-2 NAU** - "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, <sup>2</sup> in these last days has spoken to us in His Son"
2. Jesus is our Prophet, Priest, and King. Jesus is the greatest of the prophets  
**Acts 3:22-23 NAS** - "Moses said, 'The Lord God shall raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren; to Him you shall give heed in everything He says to you. <sup>23</sup> 'And it shall be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people."
3. Jesus is the revealer of God  
**John 1:18 NAU** - "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*."  
**ESV** - "he has made him known."  
**CSV** - "He has revealed Him."

C. Jesus is the source of all truth

1. Pilate asked the philosophical question: "What is truth?"  
**John 18:37-38 NAU** - "I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." <sup>38</sup> Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?"
  - a. God is truth and that which He reveals is truth. Truth is absolute and unassailable.
  - b. Jesus is the full expression of that truth.
2. People today are drowning in a great chasm of confusion. They have rejected truth in favor of a world where there are no absolutes.  
We can't define what a constitutes a marriage.  
We can't even define a male or female.  
Right or wrong is being swallowed up by human opinion.

3. Apart from Christ and His Word there is no standard—nothing by which to measure our morality.
  4. Christ as our Prophet opens our eyes to the truth
    - a. Without Christ we are characterized by darkness – in fact the Bible states that we ARE darkness, we are IN darkness, we are under the power of darkness
    - b. Apart from Christ we are void of spiritual understanding.  
**John 8:43-45 NAU** - "Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is* because you cannot hear My word. <sup>44</sup> "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies. <sup>45</sup> "But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me."
    - c. As our Prophet Jesus must open our understanding. He must remove the scales from our eyes  
**John 15:15 NAU** - "all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you."
- D. What is our necessary response to this Prophet, the embodiment of truth?
1. We must hear Him  
**Matthew 17:5 NAU** - "While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"  
 KJV – "Hear ye Him"  
**Acts 3:23 NAU** - "And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people."  
**John 5:25 NAU** - "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live."
  2. The words of Christ must be obeyed – The words of Christ are the very Word of God  
**John 8:31-32 NAU** - "If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine; <sup>32</sup> and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."  
**Matthew 7:24-8:1 NAU** - "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup> "And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. <sup>26</sup> "Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. <sup>27</sup> "The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell-- and great was its fall." <sup>28</sup> When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; <sup>29</sup> for He was teaching them as *one* having authority, and not as their scribes. "

3. There is no sweeter place than to sit under the teaching of Christ. We must hunger for His Word.  
**Luke 10:38-42 NAU** - "Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. <sup>39</sup> She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word. <sup>40</sup> But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up *to Him* and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." <sup>41</sup> But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; <sup>42</sup> but *only* one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."
4. The disciples on the Road to Emmaus  
**Luke 24:32 NAU** - "Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?"

Conclusion:

Eternal life demands both grace and truth. Both are only possible through Jesus Christ alone.

Jesus is the full measure of God's grace to humanity – **John 3:16**

And Jesus is the source of God's perfect revelation of Himself.

**John 8:32 NAU** - "you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."