

Full of Grace and Truth

Truth without grace is ugly. Hitler called God “the Almighty” while seeing Jesus as weak and pathetic. In practice Hitler was a Darwinist who saw “the survival of the fittest” as being fulfilled in Aryan supremacy. Do you want a Fuhrer (Hitler’s favorite title, “the Leader”) or a Father?

The Birth of Jesus Revealed God As:

1. _____ (Relational)

- a. *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.” John 1:1-2.* God existed as a community of three (Father, Son, Spirit) from eternity past (John 16:28; 17:24).
- b. *Delighting in the Trinity* (by Michael Reeves) stresses that only a Triune God could understand the concept of love. In contrast, Islam postulates that Allah is a singular being. Islam means “submission” with the Quran as its moral code. Salvation is gained through following Allah’s law.
- c. Jesus, the only man to keep the law fully, died on a cross to pay the penalty for all the laws we have broken. Those who place their trust in Jesus don’t need to live in fear, but can approach the throne of God with confidence (Hebrews 4:16).

2. _____ (Accepting)

- a. *“He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed on his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” John 1:11-12.* God purposed before the beginning of time to create men and women who would have fellowship with him (Ephesians 1:4-5).
- b. While Bishop Arius (256-336) taught that Jesus was a created being, Bishop Athanasius (296-373) taught that Jesus was God in the flesh. Their debate was settled at the Council of Nicea with a creed affirming the deity of the Triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). Father and Son are relational titles that affirm and highlight the love of God.
- c. Salvation is not obtained through pedigree, obeying a moral code, or following man-made philosophies. Only one thing matters – receiving Jesus as your personal Savior and becoming a child of God. Our life in heaven is portrayed in warm, personal terms (Revelation 21:3).

3. _____ (Attractive)

- a. *“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.” John 1:14.*

- b. God's glory is synonymous with his beauty (Psalm 19:1; Ezekiel 10:4). The birth of Christ was accompanied by God's glory (Luke 2:8), a glory which was progressively revealed (John 2:11; 11:4) and brought to fullness at the cross (John 12:23).
- c. The most despicable act in history (the crucifixion) revealed the height, length, breadth and depth of God's love for us.

4. _____(Harmony)

- a. *"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us...full of grace and truth."* John 1:14. Only Jesus can harmonize grace and truth, expressing them both in fullness. While truth without grace is ugly, grace without truth is mush. The relational nature of grace needs the clear and absolute standard of truth.
- b. The incommunicable attributes of God correlate with truth by reflecting reality. They are exclusive to God (omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, transcendence, immutability, self-existence). The communicable attributes of God correlate with grace by being relational and possessed by humans also (love, justice, mercy, goodness, truthfulness, rationality).
- c. Jesus expresses both grace and truth with Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the woman caught in adultery, and most fully at the cross (John 3, 4, 8, 19).

Are you thankful that God is full of both grace and truth? Will you seek to be a person who is full of grace and truth? We will be most blessed by friends who express both grace and truth to us. Will you pray that our church family is full of grace and truth?