

Grace Driven

The Bible says Jesus was “full of grace and truth.” These two concepts are both essential pieces of our faith, but can sometimes feel hard to balance, or even contradictory. Let’s study how Jesus lived out perfect grace and perfect truth without compromising either one.



INTRODUCTION

Today, Pastor Jared kicked off the “Grace & Truth” sermon series in which we will study how Jesus lived out perfect grace and perfect truth by reading the story of the woman at the well in John 4. Learning to live in a balance of grace and truth like Jesus will keep us from a life of compromise or legalism.

STARTER QUESTION

Fairhaven strives to be a church that is both grace-driven and truth-led. What do you think the term “grace-driven” means?

INTO THE WORD

1. Read John 1:14. When you read from the Bible the phrase “full of truth and grace,” how do you evaluate yourself on this continuum? Which seems more important to you? Which is more natural for you? How are grace and truth together essential to follow Christ?
2. A week ago, for Easter Sunday, we recalled God tearing the curtain in the temple from top to bottom, allowing the first real opportunity for Christ followers to see past the legalism.
 - a. In the story of the woman at the well in John chapter 4, how does Jesus demonstrate going past the barrier of legalism?
 - b. Where in the Bible does God show up offering grace before the barrier was torn at Jesus’ death?

APPLICATION

3. Would you like to share a few barriers grace is breaking down or has broken down in your life? Did you have a personal epiphany moment when you realized grace had broken a barrier, or was it a process? What barriers do you think we desperately need changed in our society today?
4. What are the ways and where are the places you can extend grace to others? Who in your life would deeply appreciate a gesture of grace from you?

PRAYER

Father, we thank you that you sent Jesus to us, full of both grace and truth. Thank you that you have given us grace as a bridge to make truth easy for us to walk in and understand. Give us the boldness to walk in this balance, not compromising because of the lack of truth and not being legalistic because of a shortage of grace on our part. Thank you, Father, for helping us break down barriers in our hearts that keep us from living a balanced Christian life. Thank you for grace and truth. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

SUGGESTED ANSWER GUIDE / MORE FOOD FOR THOUGHT FOR SELECTED QUESTIONS:

Question 1: John 1:14 ESV: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” Consider how we often view “truth and grace” as an “either or” situation rather than a “both and” description of Jesus. Pastor Jared pointed out how looking at extremes helps us to understand why both are essential. All grace and no truth is compromise. All truth and no grace is legalism. But grace is the bridge that truth is able to travel on.

Question 2a: Read John 4:4-29. Jesus went out of his way and risked his reputation by going where no Jew would venture. Then he went further by engaging the woman at the well with topics that would be taboo in that culture. By doing this, Jesus broke down gender, cultural, and religious barriers, and demonstrated the curtain being torn. There would no longer be the legalistic barrier of the law, but a balance of grace and truth for those that would follow Him.

Question 2b: God in his great mercy demonstrated grace many times to the Israelites. Examples include God showing Noah how to build the Ark thus saving humankind (Genesis 6-8), Moses’ mother placing him in the basket and Pharaoh’s daughter retrieving and raising him (Exodus 2), and when God parted the Red Sea for the Israelites to escape Pharaoh (Exodus 14).

Question 4: Here is a process you can follow to live grace-driven: Identify a barrier that needs to be broken, a mindset that may need to be challenged, or a wall of bitterness that needs to fall in at least one relationship in your life. Look (on a regular basis) for a divine appointment that God has placed and wants you to keep on behalf of someone you know. Determine how you can make yourself available to someone for an encounter with God’s grace through you. Find ways to practice over and over, being grace-driven and truth-led.