

Grace
Speaking Grace, Peace, And Truth

John 1:14

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the father, full of grace and truth.”

These days, the world is full of people arguing over the truth. People argue about truth on **social media**, in **politics**, our nation is divided over what is true. Sadly, **international terrorist** are willing to kill in order to promote their truths.

John opens up his letter by reminding us of what is special about Jesus. He came from the father, (say it with me), ***“full of grace and truth.”*** In Jesus Christ, grace and truth are joined together. His life and his message show the beauty and the power of grace and truth, walking hand in hand.

Some people emphasize Grace while others emphasize truth. But Jesus showed us that a part from grace, we cannot really speak the truth and a part from truth, we are not really speaking words of grace.

Did you know that the apostle Paul opened each one of his letters with the very same phrase? **13 times he says, “Grace and peace to you.”** 13 times! Some people might think these words are a formality, but these words even if they were formalities were breathed out by the Holy Spirit. Even the greetings are part of the inspired word of God!

Even Jesus in **Luke 10:5** instructed the disciples, ***“whatever house you enter, let your first words be “Peace to this house.”*** Jesus had in mind something more than words. This Peace Jesus instructed the disciples to give was something real, something tangible, no less tangible than handing someone a loaf of bread to eat.

So what does all of this imply?

It implies that we have the power to distribute Grace and peace to others. No less tangible today than it was when Jesus told his disciples to speak peace to the house they enter.

Our everyday lives are no different than the times in which Paul wrote his letters. Words of grace and peace are not mere formalities; they are ours to give! We have something to give. We can give grace and peace to a world in desperate need of it. After all isn't grace abundant and free?

In order for us to give grace and peace we should examine ourselves in a few different areas.

1. The first obstacle is Bitterness.

- ***Hebrews 12:15 "See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and by many become defiled."***
- Bitterness causes our heart to recoil and draw inward to avoid even Grace itself. The message from Hebrews warns us that, apart from the grace of God, our bitterness and unsettled scores seem bigger than those around us. In other words my bitterness causes my heart to recoil and draw inward to avoid even grace itself. The message from Hebrews warns us that, apart from the grace of God, our bitterness and unsettled scores keeping to those around us can defile others. We need grace to endure suffering, even in the everyday sleights of life.

2. The second opponent of grace is my fear that Grace is a zero sum game, that somehow Grace comes prepackaged in mixed amounts. Sometimes my mind has yet to inform my heart that his "mercy endures forever" and comes in limitless supply.

Part of the good news is that there is more grace! Grace for today and grace for tomorrow. God wants to provide grace in the everyday. Grace for growth and grace to sustain it. Grace and peace represent more than our need. They are the need of everyone we meet. Do we speak Grace and

peace on others? Do you have it to give or are you in short supply of it yourself?

And just as a reminder, there is a place to cultivate grace, peace, and truth. Grace grows in community but not just any community. By community I mean the church. The same father God who adopted us into his family intends that we should live together as family. This is a difficult message because in modern times the church of Jesus is largely out of joint. We can choose churches the way most people choose restaurants, according to our individual tastes. Did you know that there's 25,000 Christian denominations worldwide? Not individual churches, denominations. How can we grow in grace when we are free to wander from one family to another?

Listen to Peter in his letter: **1 Peter 4:8-11**

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength that God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and power forever and ever. Amen.”

Our words and actions are the practical expression of God’s grace. God wants to show his grace through the love, hospitality, encouragement, and service in the community of faith. We extend grace to others precisely because we’ve received grace from God.

We are called to be caretakers of grace. Too often, we have become merely consumers of grace and it has led to a church for every taste and preferences the consumers can imagine.

Also grace not only grows in the community we call church but it also grows in the most unlikely places of the church, among our shortcomings, our hypocrisies, and feelings. If everyone in the church had his or her act together what need would there be to extend grace? Look closely at the Scripture we just read. The apostle Peter calls us to use our gifts in service toward one another. **We steward the**

grace we have received by the way we speak and act toward others in the church.

I encourage you this morning to be stewards of God's grace and peace and distribute it just the way our heavenly father distributed it to us and watch people and our culture be drawn to the truth.