



Nuggets 3: Judgment or Warm Fuzzies

John describes Jesus as "full of grace and truth." I am astonished at how Jesus combines the two. People listened to Jesus because they immediately sensed how loved and valued they were to him. Yet ironically no one was plainer than Jesus in telling people the truth about themselves and about God.

We tend to think it must be either grace or truth. We and our churches often run to one end or the other-- all encouragement and warm fuzzies or else stern judgment and exclusion. Actually grace and truth are not mutually exclusive. They must be combined as Jesus did for there to be "sound doctrine" and a healing gospel. Grace without truth leads to endless sin with without repentance or accountability. Truth without grace makes us self-righteous, arrogant judges whose "gospel" would repel and demoralize anyone.

There's no good news without grace. Grace brings forgiveness, peace, and assurance of God's acceptance. Grace also "teaches us to deny ungodliness and live sober, righteous lives." Grace motivates far more obedience than law ever can. But it deals in truth.

"Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other." God make us able to "speak the truth in love."

John 1:14; Titus 2:1-3:2; John 12:32; Psalm 85:10 NIV; Ephesians 4:11-15

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