

## **“Glory, Grace, and Truth” (John 1:14–18)(1.31.21)**

John 1:14–18 (ESV)

<sup>14</sup> 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. <sup>15</sup> (John bore witness about him, and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) <sup>16</sup> For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. {The NIV says, one blessing after another.} <sup>17</sup> For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.

### **The word of God for the people of God.**

Before I pray, I also want to read this scripture from the Amplified Bible. What makes it amplified? It uses parenthetical expansion to enlarge our understanding.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word (Christ) became flesh, and lived among us; and we [actually] saw His glory, glory as belongs to the [One and] only begotten *Son* of the Father, [the Son who is truly unique, the only One of His kind, who is] full of grace and truth (absolutely free of deception). <sup>15</sup> John testified [repeatedly] about Him and has cried out [testifying officially for the record, with validity and relevance], “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I *and* has priority over me, for He existed before me.’” <sup>16</sup> For out of His fullness [the superabundance of His grace and truth] we have all received grace upon grace [spiritual blessing upon spiritual blessing, favor upon favor, and gift heaped upon gift]. <sup>17</sup> For the Law was given through Moses, but grace [the unearned, undeserved favor of God] and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has seen God [His essence, His divine nature] at any time; the [One and] only begotten God [that is, the unique Son] who is in the intimate presence of the Father, He has explained Him [and interpreted and revealed the awesome wonder of the Father].

LET US PRAY.

Title: **“Glory, Grace, and Truth”**

INTRODUCTION:

Suppose your neighbor is ill; and, suppose that you have the cure for their illness. If you withhold the cure from them, are you guilty of their death? My brothers and sisters, as sons and daughters of the Most High God, we have the cure for every sin sick-soul on this planet. We have the Lord Jesus, full of grace and truth. Will you share Him?

Many people in our culture mistake Christianity for myth or some type of morality cult. God’s guidance for us, as recorded in our Holy Scriptures, are a means of grace. They contain truth. They contain the good news of a Messiah – the Son of God – who became flesh and lived among us. Many in our culture understand our God to be a judge filled with wrath. Many that profess to be followers of Jesus err in the opposite direction, mistakenly seeing only a grandfatherly God.

Jesus came because we need a Savior. Paul writes to Titus, Titus 2:11–14 (NIV84)

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. <sup>12</sup> It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, <sup>13</sup> while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Yes, Jesus is the greatest GRACE that could be given. The radiance of the Son of God shines brightly as Shekinah glory. And, as the moon reflects the light of the sun, we are to reflect the light of the Son, who is the True Light that brings life into the world.

Charles Wesley wrote the hymn **“And Can It Be that I Should Gain”**

And can it be that I should gain  
an interest in the Savior’s blood!  
Died he for me? who caused his pain!  
For me? who him to death pursued?

**Amazing love!** How can it be  
that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

**Amazing love!** How can it be  
that thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

BODY:

Do not read today's scripture as if it diminishes the law given through Moses. God's demand for righteousness before the giving of the law is evident by the Great Flood when only righteous Noah and his family were saved. By giving the law, there was grace in it. Paul tells us that the law acts like a mirror so that we can see our great need of a Savior. He also calls the law a schoolmaster, teaching us the heart and mind of God. And, you have often heard that Jesus did not come to do away with the law, but to fulfill it. I tell you that the law is fulfilled in mercy, grace, and truth.

Moses was a "type of Christ." He foreshadowed the Lord Jesus. Moses was an instrument of salvation. I considered sharing the whole story of the Exodus because it overflows with the grace of God. Yahweh, the Great I AM, heard the cry of His people. He delivered them from slavery in Egypt and brought them into The Promised Land.

Jesus said in John 5:46 (NIV84) If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. Jesus was referring to several scriptures and types depicted in the Old Testament. For instance, Deuteronomy 18:15 (NIV84) <sup>15</sup> The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.

Then in the New Testament, we read: John 1:45 (NIV84) Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Peter preached in Acts 3:22 (NIV84) For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. The first Martyr, Stephen, preached in Acts 7:37 (NIV84) "This is that Moses who told the Israelites, 'God will send you a prophet like me from your own people.'

There is a unity in the Bible. There is continuity in the Bible. We just heard a Bible Hall of Fame's unanimous testimony about the connection between the salvation of God's Chosen People and the salvation of ALL people. For several days, I wrestled with how to demonstrate the unchanging heart of God. Our God, our Jesus, is the fullness of grace and truth – grace upon grace, blessing after blessing. And, the lesson comes from the Exodus account.

Moses, led by Yahweh, has brought the people to Mount Sinai. The LORD gave Moses the two tablets of stone, with the Ten Commandments inscribed by God's finger. In Moses' absence from the people, they become anxious and constructed the Golden Calf, worshiping and reveling around it. The LORD was going to destroy them but Moses intercedes and the LORD relented.

In God's righteous anger he sends a plague of punishment upon the Israelites. He commands Moses to lead the people into The Promised Land but says that he will not accompany them. If the LORD went with them, their stubbornness would cause their destruction. Moses goes into the Tent of Meeting to plead with the LORD God.

Exodus 33:12–23 (NIV84)

<sup>12</sup> Moses said to the Lord, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.' <sup>13</sup> If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor (the King James says grace) with you. Remember that this nation is **your people.**"

<sup>14</sup> The Lord replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

<sup>15</sup> Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. <sup>16</sup> How will anyone know that you are pleased (have found favor or grace) with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?"

<sup>17</sup> And the Lord said to Moses, “I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased (I have found favor or grace) with you and I know you by name.”

<sup>18</sup> Then Moses said, “Now show me your **glory**.”

<sup>19</sup> And the Lord said, “I will cause all my **goodness** to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the Lord, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. <sup>20</sup> But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.”

<sup>21</sup> Then the Lord said, “There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. <sup>22</sup> When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. <sup>23</sup> Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen.”

Surely, you can see the many connections with the Gospel of John. As John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus, so did Moses. The presence of God is a major element in both. The glory of God is central to both as is God’s goodness, his grace. Knowing God, the name of God, and seeing God’s face are key in each scripture. Let us explore them more deeply.

What a great blessing is the Presence of God in our personal lives and within the communion of saints. It is God’s presence that distinguishes the people of God from others. In God’s grace, He actually became a human being and lived among us. He was human in every way, eating, sleeping, and praying. Jesus was tempted in all ways, the same as we are, and yet remained without sin.

Jesus walked like us. He wept like us. He bled real human blood. And, he died like every one of us will. Through the valley of the shadow of death, the Good Shepherd is with us. Jesus told us that wherever two or three are gathered in His name, He is there amongst us. We are also connected to Jesus who is the Head, over us, the Body of Christ – the Church.

Before Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father, He promised, “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” And perhaps the biggest blessing of all is that each and every believer is the Temple of God the Holy Spirit.

Can you see the huge advantage we have over the people in Moses’ day? Are we amazed at what God has done for us?

Moses asked Yahweh, the LORD God, to show him His glory. The Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible says, “God’s glory refers primarily to his majestic beauty and splendor and the recognition of it by mankind; however, it is also an ethical concept and embraces his holiness.” The Bible gives many different ways God’s glory is conveyed. The glory of the LORD is also a manifestation of His presence; images of light and fire are prominently associated with these occurrences.”

The Messiah is described in Isaiah 11:10 (NIV84) In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and **his place of rest will be glorious**.

Hebrews 1:3 (NIV84) The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

In response to Moses’ request to see God’s glory, the Lord says, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you.” The LORD is saying that God’s goodness is God’s glory. What a precious revelation.

In order for Moses to see the Lord’s glory, God places him near Himself on a rock. Throughout scripture, a rock is a metaphor for God. Paul refers to Moses leading the Israelites through the wilderness in 1 Corinthians 10:3–4 (NIV84) <sup>3</sup> They all ate the same spiritual food <sup>4</sup> and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.

To protect Moses during the manifestation of the LORD’s presence, His glory, Moses was placed in a cleft in that Rock. Think about that powerful imagery. Because we are alive in Christ, we are loved, forgiven, chosen, and we are new creations. We can experience God; we can experience the Lord Jesus; in the fullness of grace and truth. God places His hand over us and nothing can take us from His protective shield.

While Moses was only allowed to see the LORD's back, we have seen God and God's glory. How so? We have seen Jesus and because we have seen the Son we have seen the Father. For, Colossians 1:15 (NIV84) He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

CONCLUSION:

The Prince of Preachers, Charles Spurgeon, preached: "With sin begins and ends the whole story of man; but where good appears, there grace begins; or, rather, the grace began before the good. For every good desire, for every holy thought, for every well-spoken word, for every deed of daring, for every act of self-sacrifice, let Christ be honored, for everything hath come of him. If there be any virtue, any praise, anything that is lovely or of good report, go and cast it at his feet, for from him it came. He sowed the seed out of which it grew; he created the nature out of which these good things sprung. Oh, what must the fullness be from which all the saints received all that they have!"

*The Duchess of Gordon and a companion were visiting at a cottage in Scotland when a peddler came in, threw down his pack, and asked for a drink of water. The woman of the house handed the water to him, and said, "Do you know anything of the water of life?" "By the grace of God I do." He drank the water, and then said, "Let us pray."*

*And this was his prayer: "Oh, Lord, give us grace to feel our need of grace. Oh, Lord, give us grace to receive grace. Oh, Lord, give us grace to ask for grace. Oh, Lord, give us grace to use grace when grace is given." He then took up his pack and went away, having preached a powerful sermon in those few words.*

There was a church that was looking for a new pastor. One candidate seemed very promising so they invited the pastor to meet with the search committee. After several preliminary questions, they asked the candidate what can be done so that their church might grow. Their prospective pastor replied, "There has to be something at the church that the people are excited to talk about."

You may be surprised to hear that I totally agree. That "something" is the Lord Jesus Christ, full of grace and truth.

**Pastor Emmanuel T. Sibomana wrote,**

*"O how the grace of God*

*Amazes me!*

*It loosed me from my bonds*

*And set me free!*

*What made it happen so?*

*His own will, this much I know,*

*Set me, as now I show,*

*At liberty."*

Are you amazed at the grace of God? Are you thankful for what the Lord Jesus has done for you? Tell someone about Jesus. Throw them the life ring that may save their eternal life.

Amen and amen. Let us pray.