



## ASTONISHED!

Part 5: Inexhaustible Grace (John 1:14, 16-18)

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**To those who receive Jesus as Savior and Lord,  
God's grace is inexhaustible.**

### I. God's Astonishing Revelation (John 1:1-18)

In John's prologue to his Gospel (John 1:1-18), we've seen these astonishing truths revealed to us:

- At the beginning was a personal God revealed in Jesus Christ. Jesus reveals to us the mystery of the Trinity = One God existing eternally in three Persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). At the heart of the universe has always been a community of perfect love and joy!
- The Triune God desires to be known and has taken unimaginable action to reveal Himself ultimately through the "light" of Jesus Christ. God became a man in Jesus of Nazareth!
- In His great love, God the Father has granted Jesus authority to receive us as God's beloved children so we don't have to live as slaves or orphans!

### II. Truth (Law) Cannot Save Without Grace

John speaks of two decisive events in the history of salvation in which he contrasts the grace in the old and new covenants (John 1:14, 16-17):

1. The gift of the law (*torah*) through Moses (v. 17).
2. The coming of Jesus Christ, who expresses the "fullness (*pleroma* = *superabundance, completeness*) of His grace" (v. 16).

The Hebrew law was *Yahweh's* gracious instruction and *light* guiding Israel how to live in covenant relationship with Him. While it was God's gift, it was only a "*shadow*" and "*tutor*" pointing to Jesus (Hebrews 10:1, Colossians 2:17, Galatians 3:24). But the law had a significant deficiency = it could not impart God's *life* to the people (Romans 7:10, 8:1-4). It could not change their hearts so that they would love *Yahweh*.

### III. God's Inexhaustible Grace in Jesus Christ

*"From the fullness (pleroma = superabundance, completeness) of His grace, we have all received grace upon grace" (John 1:16).*

*"What is grace? In the New Testament, grace means God's love in action toward people who merited the opposite of love...."*

*The New Testament knows both a will of grace and a work of grace. The former is God's eternal plan to save; the latter is God's 'good work in you' (Phil. 1:6), whereby he calls you into a living relationship with Christ (1 Cor. 1:9), raises you from the death to life (Eph. 2:1-6), seals you as his own by the gift of the Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14), transforms you into Christ's image (2 Cor. 3:18), and will finally raise your body in glory (Rom. 8:30, 1 Cor. 15:47-54)."* J.I. Packer, "Knowing God," p.249

God's grace in Christ is both pardon and power. God's inexhaustible grace comes through Jesus by the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39, 15:1-17).

*"...in our experience we have drawn upon that treasure store, and have found that the more we draw the more remained that we might draw from that; for every grace received there was more grace offered."*  
William Temple

- God's grace unites us to Jesus so that His life can flow into us. He fills our deadness with His life (John 15, Ephesian 2:1-10).
- God's grace cleanses us from our sin with Jesus' purity (Titus 3:4-7, 1 John 1:7-9).
- God's grace fills our unbelief with Jesus' faith (Mark 9:23-24, Hebrews 12:1-3).
- God's grace fills our weakness with Jesus' power (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).
- God's grace fills our indifference for God with love of God (Matthew 22:34-40, Ephesians 3:14-19)

*"God command what you will, but give what you command."* Augustine

#### **IV. The Glory of God's Self-Giving Love (John 1:14, 18)**

The glory of the Eternal Creator humbling Himself to become a man, born like all men as a helpless baby!

The glory of the Son identifying with our sin in His baptism by John!

The glory of the Son kneeling to wash our dirty feet!

The glory of the Son taking our sin and God's wrath on Himself for us!

All of Jesus' ministry revealing the glory of the Triune God of Grace, who gives Himself for sinners in inexhaustible grace!

The Christian life is lived before the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:14-16).

#### **Discussion Questions (for small groups or the dinner table):**



What specifically does John say about Jesus of Nazareth?



Consider J.I. Packer's definition of grace and v. 16. What are the implications of these truths?



How are you learning to rely on God's grace in Jesus rather than your own resources?