

Jesus Christ Superstore - Week 2

Jesus is Grace AND Truth - Ben Foote

May 1, 2022

Group Creed

We come together as a Group with the goal of Spiritual Formation--encouraging one another to become the same kind of person that Jesus is, so that we can live out every part of our lives inside of His Kingdom.

// Bible References

Matthew 5:48; Mark 1:40, 1:41-44; John 1:14, 14:6; Ephesians 2:8-9.

// Message Summary

This week was our second week in our series titled *Jesus Christ Superstore*. This series is about doing the work to get to know the real Jesus - not the fake, distorted and cheap versions with which we are so often presented. These versions are the result of us wanting to personalize Him to fit our own individual tastes, styles, passions, or stage of life. Jesus becomes just another item at a superstore - if we don't like one version, then we can just pick another version. But the Jesus of the Bible doesn't allow for such personalization. He is Who He is, and He won't change for anyone.

Two distorted views of Jesus that Pastor Ben presented to us were 'Principal Jesus' and 'Get-out-of-jail-free Jesus'. Principal Jesus holds such a high standard of perfection that none of us meet it. He watches your every move, ready to give you a pass or a fail (and only those who are perfect earn a pass). He is all truth and no grace. Get-out-of-jail-free Jesus, on the other hand, is ready to bail you out, any and every time you mess up. He is not interfering with anything going on in your life, and He certainly does not want to convict you or hurt your feelings. His rules, boundaries and commands are outdated, and His truth needs to catch up with the times.

Ben challenges us to reject these distorted versions of Jesus, and replace them with Who the Bible says He is: the God of truth and grace.

// Biblical and Historical Context

When John was writing his memoir of Jesus, he had a very specific purpose in mind: for us to believe in Jesus and consequently have life in His Name (John 20:31). In John 1:14, we are shown Who Jesus is: the glory of God, full of grace and truth. God's grace might be defined as the unmerited and undeserved favor of God towards those who are under condemnation. It is a free gift, given from the righteous to the unrighteous, and from the strong to the weak, as an act of compassion. God's truth might be defined as His ability to comprehend and communicate reality. He is the source of all knowledge - from scientific to moral - and He makes reality known to us for our benefit. So, as the One Who is full of truth and grace, Jesus communicates to us reality, but is also compassionate towards us when we suffer the consequences of rejecting His reality.

// Community Questions

1. Your good friend buys a new sweater that you think makes them look really awful, and asks you if you like it. Do you:
 - a. tell them they need to take it back and exchange it for something better, or
 - b. tell them they look amazing and you can't wait to be seen out with such a stylish friend?

// Discussion Questions

1. Together, read John 1:14. What questions does it raise for you?
2. If Jesus had been solely "full of truth", how would He have acted? How about if He had only been "full of grace".
3. Ben said that Jesus' grace saves us from hell *after* earth, and His truth saves us from hell *on* earth. What does he mean by this?
4. Jesus' truth is often confronting and convicting, and usually doesn't feel good when we hear it. At the same time, it is *good* for us. Can you share a time when you realized that His truth was good for you, even if it didn't feel good when you heard it?
5. When you think of God as both truth and grace, how does that change your approach to Him?

// Challenge

It is very likely that one part of Jesus' nature - His truth or His grace - gets more attention in your life than the other. Which one gets the least attention? Take time this week to focus on that area. Find a passage from the Bible that describes this part of Who He is. Pray to God to reveal Himself more and more in the area that you need to see more of Him.