



lovehealsTV.com

where your **new story** begins

## 7: GRACE AND TRUTH

For years I have focused on the subject of “truth” because it had become clear to me that truth is central to the process of healing the mind and emotions. As it says in John 8:32, “The truth will set you free.” And yet I kept coming back to John 1:17 where it says, “For the law was given through Moses: grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” In my counseling practice I observed Jesus setting the captives free with His truth. But, what is grace all about? How does grace fit into the picture?

Then I read Dr. Henry Cloud’s book, “Changes That Heal,” and in chapter one he clarified the relevance of grace and truth together. Let me try to summarize some of what he wrote: Grace is the unmerited favor of God toward people. It is something that is never earned. It is a gift of unconditional love and acceptance. Grace is the “relational” aspect of God’s character - a relationship that offers the gift of undeserved compassion, unconditional acceptance and unmerited love. Truth, on the other hand, is the “structural” aspect of God’s character. God’s truth contains the form that our soul and spirit should take. Without truth, God’s people keep falling into the same old unhealthy patterns over and over. They needed truth to steer them away from trouble. In the Bible, truth is given in the form of laws (ten commandments), parables and instruction. These truths are a blueprint and a structure for people to live by. They offer guidance and set limits.

The problem with the law was that people soon learned that they could never measure up. In Galatians 5:4, it says; “You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.” Dr. Cloud says, “Truth without grace is judgment. The law and truth without grace destroys us. No one ever grows when they are under the law, for the law puts us into a strictly legal relationship with God. (I’ll love you only if you do what is true or right.) Getting truth before grace, or truth before relationship brings guilt, anxiety, anger, and a host of other painful emotions.”

Wow! Who wants to live in a place where, everywhere you turn, you run into a “should” and there is very little acceptance? While truth in the mind transforms the mind, truth in relationships without grace becomes legalism. We are justified by grace and the truth of the Word is there to help us live in freedom. But what about the other extreme - grace without truth? It is not much better. Grace without truth can also have devastating results. A lack of truth and discipline leads to a life without limits, resulting in mistakes, confusion, pain and chaos. To have acceptance without direction means anything goes and that gets us into trouble. The lack of boundaries allows us to go where God does not want us to go and, as a result, we become disconnected in our relationship with God. Because straying from God’s helpful truth leads us into destructive behaviours and moral failures, guilt and shame enter the picture, causing us to hide. When the true self is hiding, the false self takes over and the false self helps us to become conformed to this world. When we hide, we cannot get help for our needs and brokenness. While Jesus does not condemn us, we tend to be hard on ourselves with self-condemnation. Lack of self-forgiveness is one of the ways that we





lovehealsTV.com

where your **new story** begins

## **GRACE AND TRUTH**

**page 2 of 2**

humans get ourselves in a lonely, dark place where we feel that God is far away from us.

### **What Is The Solution? – *It's Grace and Truth Together.***

Grace and truth together reverse the effects of the fall of Adam and Eve. Grace and truth together invite us out of isolation and into relationship. Grace, when it is combined with truth, invites the true self, the “me” as I really am, warts and all, into relationship making true intimacy possible. Jesus’ example of grace and truth is provided in the story of the adulterous woman in John 8:3-11. After all the men who wanted to stone her had left, Jesus offered her grace. “Then neither do I condemn you.”

\*\*\*