

**In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.**

John 1:1 (ESV)

**Prologue to Easter:
The Incarnation of “The Word”
(John 1:14-18)**

John 1:14-18 (ESV)

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ (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.'")

¹⁶ For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

I. The Incarnation

(John 1:14)

- ¹⁴ And **the Word became flesh** and dwelt among us (John 1:14)

I. The Incarnation

(John 1:14)

- A. Defining the "Incarnation"
- B. Necessity of the Incarnation (Anselm)
- C. Result of the Incarnation

A. Defining the “Incarnation”

- **Jesus as “The Light of the World”**
- ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it (John 1:4-5)
- ⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world (John 1:9)

A. Defining the “Incarnation”

- **14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us** (John 1:14)
- “Fundamentally, *incarnation*, is a theological assertion that in Jesus **the eternal Word of God appeared in human form** (John 1). . . . The orthodox doctrine of the incarnation asserts that in taking humanity upon himself, Christ did not experience a loss of his divine nature in any way but continued to be fully God” (*Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*, 1999).

B. Necessity of the Incarnation

- “We are debtors who cannot possibly pay the moral debt that we have incurred by our offense against the righteousness of God” (R.C. Sproul, “Why the God-Man?”)
- R.C. Sproul (1939-2017) American Reformed theologian and founder of Ligonier Ministries)

The Problem: Human Sinfulness

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God(Romans 3:23)



C. Result of the Incarnation

- ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh (Romans 8:3)

- “a”: *Or and as a sin offering*

C. Result of the Incarnation

- **Anselm of Canterbury** (1033/34-1109)
- A “systematic theologian”
- Rejected previously held theory that Jesus died to pay the price of redemption of humanity to Satan since Satan was the “ruler of the world”

Anselm of Canterbury

(1033/34-1109)

- ***Cur Deus Homo*** (*Latin*, written approximately 1099 A.D.)
- “Why God Man” (“Why God Became Man”)
- Argued for the “**Satisfaction Theory of Redemption**”:
- “If God in his mercy had simply forgiven humans for their sin, God’s moral order would have been repudiated. God’s righteousness, offended by human sin, demanded satisfaction; that satisfaction could be rendered only by someone who was both God—because God could overcome sin by sinlessness—and human—because humans were those who were guilty of sin.” (Britannica Online, “Medieval Christology”)

C. Result of the Incarnation

- ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸ All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

C. Result of the Incarnation

- “Justice is served by the work of Christ who satisfies the demands of God’s righteousness, thereby maintaining God’s commitment to righteousness and justice. God satisfied the demands of His righteousness by giving to us a Substitute who stands in our place, offering that satisfaction for us. This displays marvelously the graciousness of God in the midst of that satisfaction.”

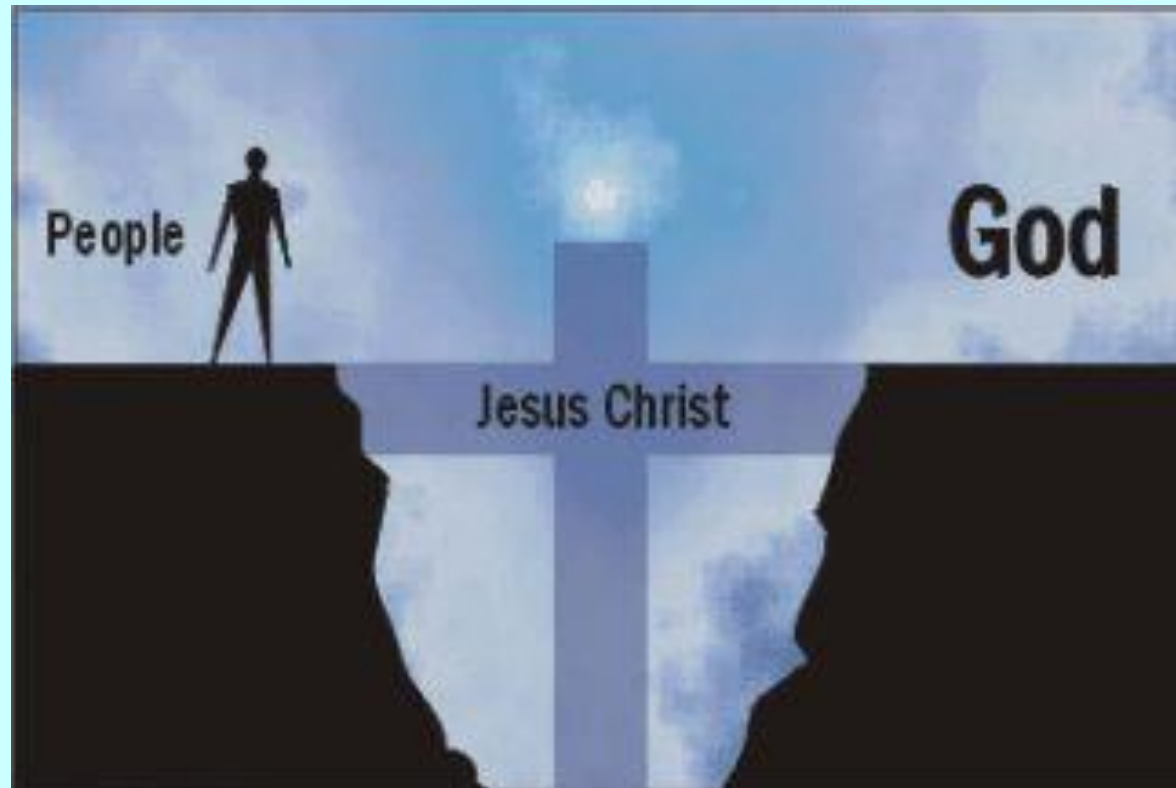
(R.C. Sproul, “Why the God-Man?”)

C. Result of the Incarnation

- My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ² He is **the propitiation** for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)

God's Solution

- ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. (Romans 3:23-25 ESV)



II. Grace

(John 1:14, 16, 17)

- ¹⁴ 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.
- ¹⁶ For from his fullness we have all received, **grace upon grace**.^[b]
- ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; **grace** and truth came through Jesus Christ.

II. Grace

(John 1:14, 16, 17)

A. Confession as a Spiritual Discipline

B. Defining "Grace"

C. Result of Grace

A. Confession as a Spiritual Discipline

- Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper,
but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy. (Proverbs 28:13)
- I acknowledged my sin to you,
and I did not cover my iniquity;
I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,”
and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. (Psalm 32:5)
- If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

B. Defining “Grace”

- **Hymn: “Grace Greater Than Our Sin”** (Julia H. Johnston, 1910)
- Refrain:
Grace, grace, God's grace,
Grace that will pardon and cleanse within;
Grace, grace, God's grace,
Grace that is greater than all our sin!

B. Defining “Grace”

- ***American Heritage College Dictionary*** (4th edition, 2002)
 - Mercy
 - A favor rendered by someone who need not do so
 - Divine love and protection bestowed freely on people
 - *Christianity*: The state of being protected or sanctified (set aside for sacred use; to make holy; purify) by the favor of God
- ***A Survey of the New Testament*** (Robert H. Gundry, 2003)
 - “The favor of God toward ill-deserving human beings, without meritorious good works on their part” (p. 451)

C. Result of Grace

- ⁴ But God, being **rich in mercy**, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of **his grace** in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
- ⁸ For **by grace** you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the **gift** of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
- ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

(Ephesians 2:4-10, ESV)

C. Result of Grace

- “Repentant believers immediately come to be ‘in Christ,’ so that **their sin is transferred to Christ, and God’s righteousness is transferred to them.** . . . In this way God can lovingly treat believers as righteous (the doctrine of justification) while still upholding his own standard of justice” (Gundry, 2003).

C. Result of Grace

- **Heidelberg Catechism (1563 A.D.)**
- **QUESTION & ANSWER #60**
- Q. How are you righteous before God?
- A. Only by true faith in Jesus Christ.¹
- Even though my conscience accuses me
- of having grievously sinned against all God's commandments,
of never having kept any of them,²
and of still being inclined toward all evil,³

Heidelberg Catechism: Question #60

- nevertheless,
- without any merit of my own,⁴
out of sheer grace,⁵
- God grants and credits to me
the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ,⁶
- as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner,
and as if I had been as perfectly obedient
- as Christ was obedient for me.⁷
- All I need to do
is accept this gift with a believing heart.⁸

Heidelberg Catechism: Question #60

- ¹ Rom. 3:21-28; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9; Phil 3:8-11
- ² Rom. 3:9-10
- ³ Rom. 7:23
- ⁴ Titus 3:4-5
- ⁵ Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8
- ⁶ Rom. 4:3-5 (Gen. 15:6); 2 Cor. 5:17-19; 1 John 2:1-2
- ⁷ Rom. 4:24-25; 2 Cor. 5:21
- ⁸ John 3:18; Acts 16:30-31

III. Truth

(John 1:14, 17)

- **14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son^[a] from the Father, full of grace and **truth**.
- **17** For the law was given through Moses; grace and **truth** came through Jesus Christ.

III. Truth

(John 1:14, 17)

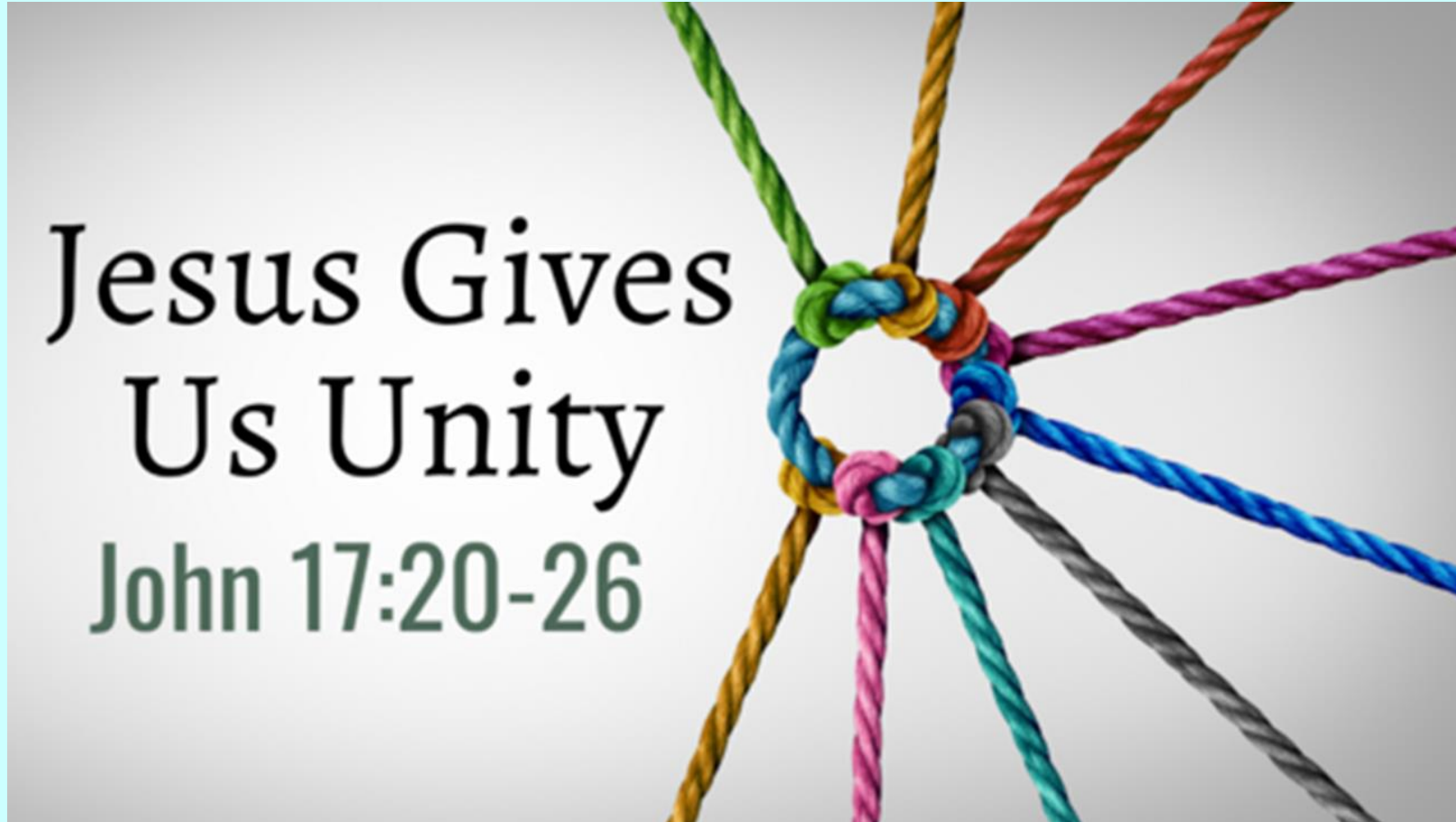
- A. Defining "Truth"
- B. Stability of Truth (Logocentrism)
- C. Faith and Truth

A. Defining “Truth”

- “That which reflects factual and/or spiritual reality.
- Some thinkers view truth in purely intellectual categories, namely, as the affirmation of what is. Hence, truth becomes correct assertions or factual statements (factuality).
- In recent times, certain thinkers have suggested that truth is subjective, relative, and pluralistic.
- Viewed from a theological perspective, truth is grounded in the being and will of the triune God. **Hence, whatever reflects God’s own being and will is truth.**
- Furthermore, **Jesus Christ is the truth in that he is the revelation of God.**

--Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms (1999)

B. Stability of Truth (Logocentrism)



C. Faith and Truth

- ⁶ Jesus said to him [Thomas], “**I am** the way, and **the truth**, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)
- Anselm: “Credo ut intelligam” (“I believe in order that I might understand”)

Takeaway:

- As we prepare ourselves spiritually to celebrate Easter, let us remind ourselves that because of the Incarnation, humans have been redeemed and can be reconciled to God by accepting Jesus as Savior and Lord of their lives.

A silhouette of two hands holding a glowing cross against a sunset background. The hands are positioned in the center-right of the frame, with the fingers spread and the palms facing each other. A bright, glowing cross is centered between the hands, emitting a strong light that creates a lens flare effect. The background is a warm, golden sunset over a body of water, with the sun low on the horizon. The sky is filled with soft, orange and yellow clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and spiritual.

Let Us Pray