



new life fellowship

**Sermon Title: Managing Tensions in an Either/Or World**

**Speaker: Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor**

**Scripture: John 1:14**

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

*John 1:14 (NIV)*

**Sermon Outline:**

In this passage of scripture, we see Jesus Christ as he is the full embodiment of grace and truth. In Christ there is full grace and in Christ there is full truth. Jesus was fully both of these things, and the manner in which he applied it was different for everyone. He would confuse the disciples as to what he would do, because to some people Jesus offered grace and to other people truth.

The Bible is full of tensions – Jesus is both fully God and fully human. We are called to rejoice always while at the same time have the book of Lamentations. We see individualistic sin and institutional sin occurring in scripture.

What does it mean that Jesus was full of **grace**? He was full of compassion, empathy, grace and forgiveness. **Grace is what God does for you that you cannot do for yourself.** What does it mean that Jesus was full of **truth**? He was honest, direct, and came against Satan. Jesus was committed to reality and living in his reality.

In our lives, we don't necessarily operate like Jesus did. We take sides holding fast to the side that we are on, living with tension in the middle. We end up asking ourselves, which side should we emphasize? As a result of this, we find ourselves pulling against each other - in our families, our workplaces and in church.

**Grace** says: You're going to be okay.

**Truth** says: You're going to have to work on it.

**Grace** says: You're fine.

**Truth** says: No, you're broken.

**Grace** says: Come as you are.

**Truth** says: Just don't stay that way.

When it comes to politics, we live in a world marked by animosity, hatred, lying, bearing of false witness and slander. We have lost the ability to navigate between grace and truth. The Church needs to be something different than the world. Only Jesus Christ is full of grace and truth. Politically, we often have a lot of grace for the people we support and truth for the people we don't support. When there is a lot of truth without grace, we can harbor a hardness of heart towards one another, creating boundaries toward others. We need to speak truth in a way that we treat people as human beings made in the image of God.

How do we live this out? There is no easy answer to living with grace and truth. We are all sinners and need to realize we are on a spectrum living between grace and truth. We need to ask the Holy Spirit to help us move us on the spectrum, so that we don't end up living in one space over the other. We need to live with God, connecting with Him in prayer and in scripture.

God doesn't live on the spectrum like we do. He is steadfast and full of both grace and truth. It is because of this that we can trust ourselves to God.

**Sermon Summary:**

This Sunday Lead Pastor Richard Villodas' sermon is on Managing Tensions in an Either/Or World. Today Pastor Rich discusses how the church is to be a different kind of presence in the world, as we are living with the difficult tensions of being in an either/or culture.

**Sermon Questions:**

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In your family of origin, how did you experience grace and truth? Were these two talked about and modeled in your family growing up? If not, how does this form what you understand about grace and truth today and how you live these out in your life?
3. Do you relate to God as truth without grace? Are you feeling like God is a tyrant, who is always mad at you and judging you? If so, what can you do this week to remember that God loves you with both grace and truth, and is not out to condemn you?
4. Where do you find yourself on the grace/truth spectrum? What is your default mode – more towards grace or truth? Try and pay close attention this week and see if you can't ask the Holy Spirit to help you when you are leaning more to one side than the other.
5. Be of good courage this week, especially when you find yourself getting mad. In that moment listen to the Holy Spirit and ask God to help you move to the side of grace.