



Series: Light in the Darkness

Title: The Power of Jesus Christ

Passage: John 1:14-28

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Introduction:

- Merry Christmas everyone.
 - I'm so glad you're here today to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - And my prayer is that you would be encouraged, as we meditate on all that Christ has done for us.
- At the same time, some of you may be here, and you may not be sure what it means to follow Jesus.
 - And that's okay, because this morning, we're going to look at what the Bible says about Jesus, and all that he's done.
 - And why this matters for your life.
- So today, I want to show you two eternal blessings that are true for all who believe in Christ.
 - And my hope is that, by the end, you would be encouraged to trust in Jesus Christ.
 - And that all of us would leave here, worshipping the newborn King with joy in our hearts.



Point 1:

- The blessing I want you to see is how, Jesus gives his grace, to those who follow him.
 - There's a lot of pressure in our world today.
 - And I think all of us could use more grace in our lives.
 - And here in our passage, it shows, how those who follow Jesus, are given an abundance of grace.
- Take a look at verse 14:
 - **“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us...”**
John 1:14
- For Jesus to become flesh means that he became a human person.
 - This doesn't mean Jesus stopped being God.
 - Jesus was, and always is, fully God.
 - For Jesus to become flesh also doesn't mean, Jesus took on sinful flesh.
 - Jesus has no sin.
 - But it does mean, that Jesus was born in human form.
 - In Philippians 2, the Bible states how Jesus took the form of a servant, by being found in human form.
 - That means, Jesus took on human nature.

Jesus understands our suffering:

- And one reason, Jesus took on human form was to understand our suffering.
 - In verse 14, John could've used the word body or man, but instead he says that Jesus became flesh.



- This word, flesh, refers to human frailty and weakness.
- And here, John explains, that Jesus came, to know suffering, as we know suffering.
- Hebrews chapter 4 states:
- **“For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Hebrews 4:15**

- Think about all the frailty, Jesus experienced in this world.

- He knows what it’s like to be poor.
 - He was born in a manger, and not a palace.

- He understands what it feels like to be unfairly judged.
 - He was judged by the Pharisees and religious leaders.

- He knows the pain of broken relationships.
 - He was betrayed by his friends, even doubted by his family.

- He knows what it feels like to be worn down and running on empty.
 - He felt hungry, and tired.

- He knows what it feels like, to carry the burden of others.
 - People were constantly asking Jesus for help, and wanting his attention.

- He knows what it’s like to miss someone you love.
 - He wept in anguish, when he saw death in this world.



- Do you remember the story of Lazarus?
 - He, was the brother of Mary and Martha.
 - He was very sick, and sadly he died.
 - And when Jesus came to meet Mary, we're told that Mary ran to Jesus.
 - She fell at his feet, with tears in her eyes.
 - And do you remember what she said?
 - **“Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”** John 11:32
 - And the Bible says in John 11, that Jesus was deeply moved.
 - And seeing where they laid Lazarus, we're told that Jesus wept.

- What's interesting is that, Jesus knew he was going to raise Lazarus from the grave.
 - This was part of the plan.
 - That's why he delayed in coming to Lazarus, when Lazarus was sick.
 - And he could've said:
 - “Now, Mary, don't cry.”
 - “It's okay”
 - “This is part of the plan.”
 - “I'm going to raise your brother from the grave.”
 - “You don't have to be sad.”
 - But that's not what he does.
 - Rather, he comes to her, and weeps with her.

- There will be hardships and trials you face in life, that you don't understand.



- And it may be, all you can do is cry.
- But remember this, just as Jesus wept with Mary, he also weeps with you.
- Jesus became flesh.
 - That means, he experienced the weakness of human frailty.

Jesus knows how to help:

- Not only does Jesus know your frailty, he also knows how to help.
 - Jesus doesn't just understand your suffering.
 - He knows how to help you, in your suffering.
 - In Hebrews 4 it says that Jesus is able to sympathize with our weaknesses, but it also says we can receive mercy and find grace in our time of need.
 - In other words, God is able to help us, in our time of need.
 - Pastor Kevin DeYoung states:
 - *It is a glory beyond measure that the incarnate and perpetual God-man is able to sympathize with our weakness, but sympathy itself is not the (main) point...The point is that because of the Son's identification with his brothers he can help us...The emphasis is not (only) on Jesus feeling the right thing in heaven. Rather, the good news is that because he has felt what we felt, he will surely come to our aid. ([LINK](#))*
- Christian author Ron Hutchcraft wrote a book about what helped him face the pain of losing his wife.
 - She passed away, and he describes the grief he faced.



- But he also shares, how it really helped to have a friend who experienced the same pain.
 - His friend knew what to say and what not to say.
 - His friend knew the resources he needed.
 - His knew what was ahead for Ron.
 - Ron's friend, not only shared his pain, but was able to help him, in his pain.
- In the same way, Jesus doesn't just feel your pain, he's able to give you help in your time of need.
 - **"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses...**
 - And then listen to the next verse.
 - **Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."** Hebrews 4:15-16
 - Jesus knows how to help.
 - Jesus Christ came in the flesh.
 - That means, he knows our sorrows.
 - That means, he knows how to help.

3 ways Jesus gives mercy and grace:

- But Jesus Christ coming in the flesh also means, the way Jesus helps, is by giving us more mercy, and more grace.
 - **"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."**
 - Here we have to ask what it means, for God to give us more mercy and grace, in our time of need?



a. Strength for weakness

- In 2 Corinthians 12, the Apostle Paul asked the Lord to remove a thorn in his flesh.
 - Most likely, this thorn was a physical illness or struggle in Paul's body.
 - Three times Paul pleaded with the Lord.
 - And listen to what God said to Paul:
 - **"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."** 2 Corinthians 12:9
- Do you see the meaning of grace in this passage?
 - God was saying to Paul, "I'm not going to take this thorn away, but I will give you my strength, so you can endure this weakness."
 - When we face an illness or sickness, we should pray for healing.
 - But we also need to pray for grace.
 - And when we do, we'll see that God gives us strength to face our pain.
 - Hebrews 13:9 states:
 - **"It is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace..."** Hebrews 13:9
 - To receive God's grace means, that he gives us strength, to face weakness in our lives.

b. Wisdom to grow

- Other people may think the way Christ can help, is by changing their circumstances.



- “If I only had just a little more money.”
 - “If I could just get married.”
 - “If I could just get out of this marriage.”
 - “If I could just get a new job.”
 - “If this busy season, would just end.”
 - Of course, when we face difficult circumstances, we can pray for God to change our circumstances.
- But receiving God’s grace in difficult circumstances means, that God gives us wisdom to grow in our difficult circumstances.
 - Jesus may not change our circumstances, but through his grace, he’ll train your heart, to become more like him.
 - Do you see how helpful this is?
 - That means instead of difficult circumstances bringing you down, they’re actually able to help you grow.
 - Titus 2:11-12 states:
 - **“For the grace of God has appeared...training us to renounce ungodliness...and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.”** Titus 2:11-12
 - God’s grace is able to help us grow in godliness.
 - And so, to receive grace means that, God gives us wisdom to grow in difficult circumstances.

c. Mercy to forgive

- Receiving grace also means, learning to give mercy to others.
 - When you face difficulties in life, you may feel, what God needs to change, is the people in your life.



- If my co-worker could change his attitude, then I'd be happy.
- If my family member would see the pain she's causing, everything would be good.
- If my children respected me, I wouldn't be so angry.
- If my spouse were more organized, life would be easier.
- Again, I want to say, we need to pray that God would grow and change, the people we love.
- That's a good prayer to pray.
- But receiving God's grace, when we face difficult people means, we learn to give grace, as Jesus Christ has given grace to us.
 - You may criticize someone for making a mistake.
 - But if you were to make that same mistake, most likely you'd show more grace, and forgive that person.
 - In the same way, it's when we see how sinful we are, we can give grace, by being patient, and forgiving, and kind, even to a person who's difficult to love.
 - The truth is, every single one of us, needs God's grace.
 - Because no one is righteous, not even one.
 - We're all sinners needing God's grace.
 - But the good news is that God has shown mercy.
 - And it's when we see the grace God has given, we can show grace to others.
 - Receiving God's grace means, we learn to show mercy to others, as Christ has shown to us.
- Here we see, how Jesus Christ gives his grace, to those who follow him.
 - You can have:



- Strength in your weakness.
- Wisdom to grow.
- And mercy to forgive.

Point 2:

- The second blessing I want you to see in our passage, is how, Jesus Christ gives himself, to those who follow him.
 - Christianity isn't just about receiving blessings from Christ.
 - It's so much more.
 - Christianity is about knowing Jesus Christ.
 - In fact, without Christ, you can do nothing, and you gain nothing.
 - And in our passage, we're able to see, what it means, for Christ to live with us.
- Take a look again, at verse 14:
 - **"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us..."**
John 1:14
- This word, dwelt, has the meaning of pitching one's tent, or living in a tent.
 - Literally, it means that Jesus pitched his tent among his people.

God's presence was in the tabernacle:

- John is basically tying Jesus coming to the world, with the glory of the tabernacle in Exodus.



- The tabernacle was an elaborate tent, built by God's people.
- It was where the presence of God appeared.
- There was a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night over the tabernacle.
- It showed that God's presence was with his people.
- Exodus 25 verse 8 states:
- **“And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst.”** Exodus 25:8
- God wanted to let his people know, his presence was with them.

God's presence is now with you:

- And for those who follow Christ, this means the presence of Christ, is now with you.
 - Our God isn't a distant God.
 - But our God, is a God, who's with us.
 - He's Emmanuel.
 - He's God with us.
 - And when you believe in Jesus, the Bible says that you become the temple, or the tabernacle, where God now dwells.
- My middle son yelled when he was a little kid, and said, “Dad, I just want to rip my heart out, and cut it open.”
 - And I said to him, “Why would you want to do that?”
 - He said, “Because I learned that Jesus lives in my heart, and I want to see him!”
 - And I had to tell him, that Jesus isn't a little toy figurine, but rather a spiritual presence.



- When you follow Jesus, the presence Jesus Christ, lives in you.
- Paul writes:
- **“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.”** Galatians 2:20

3 ways, God’s presence will effect your life:

- Here’s what this means, to have Christ living in you.

a. You don’t have to be afraid

- It means, you don’t have to be afraid.
 - I said this before, but I’ll say it again.
 - Do you know what’s the most repeated command in the Bible?
 - It’s not, love others more.
 - Or pray more.
 - Or give more.
 - The most repeated command in the Bible is, “Do not be afraid.”
 - It’s because, even the toughest of us, will face fear in life.
 - And in those times, we’ll be tempted to act on our fear.
 - To rush a decision, instead of waiting on God.
 - To run away from a problem, instead of facing it head on.
 - To defend ourselves, instead of waiting on God.
 - To overprotect our children, instead of trusting in God.
 - And here’s the thing about acting in fear.
 - You’ll only end up making things worse.
 - Decisions made in fear, usually don’t end well.



- But for Christ's presence to be with us means, we don't have to act in fear.
 - Can you imagine the comfort God's people felt, looking at this massive cloud, over the tabernacle?
 - The people could say, "God is with us."
 - And it's the same with us.
 - For Christ to be with us, means, he's is watching over us.
 - **"Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."** Joshua 1:9

b. You don't have to be alone

- For Jesus to be with us, also means we don't have to make decisions out of loneliness.
 - Lonely driven choices may come from lost love.
 - Or a love that never was.
 - Or a shattered marriage.
 - Or a breakup.
 - Or even from jealousy.
 - And it may cause someone to settle, and get into a relationship that can bring more pain than love.
 - But for Jesus Christ to be with us, means that we can find security in his love, and his grace.
- It may be the case, that you never find that special someone in this life.
 - But remember that in heaven there is no marriage.
 - Marriage is a great gift from God.
 - But it's only a momentary gift.
 - It's only for this earth.



- But everlasting joy, is found, only in Christ.
- And because Christ dwells with you, you can rest secure in his love.

c. You can have hope in Christ.

- For Christ to live in you, also means that you don't have to put your hope in your achievements, but in the work of Jesus Christ.
 - You can put your hope, in what Christ has accomplished for you.
- Since I was very young, I grew up in the church.
 - And I always served in some capacity in the church.
 - I served on the worship team.
 - I helped with the children's ministry.
 - I felt that I was a really good Christian.
 - Many people even said, they could see me as a pastor.
 - But when I got into college, I remember experiencing sins, I never thought I'd experience.
 - I remember feeling guilty and ashamed.
 - Interestingly, during that time, I promised a friend to serve at an inner-city Christian camp over the summer as a counselor.
 - I felt like such a hypocrite, because of my sin.
 - But I went because I promised to serve.
 - And let me tell you, these kids were rough.
 - They were swearing at me, during our small group time.
 - They struggled with drug addiction.
 - Many came from broken homes.
 - Some of the girls were pregnant.



- And I felt that none of them could change.
 - I just wanted the week to end.
 - But on the last night, we had a time, when the students could come up, and give their testimony.
 - I honestly thought, “No one’s going to come up.”
 - But I was amazed, as student after student came up, and shared how they met God.
 - And as each student came up to share, I could feel the Holy Spirit speaking to me, and saying:
 - “You thought you were better than all these kids, but don’t you see, you’re just like them, you’re a sinner, and you need my grace.”
 - And even though I was a Christian, that was the first time, I understood, more deeply, how great God’s forgiveness was, and what it meant to put my hope in Christ, and not my achievements.
- For Jesus to be with us means, that we don’t have to put our hope, in success, or achievements, or a title, or our education, or how much money we make, or a job.
 - But it means, that we can put our hope, in the forgiveness we have in Christ.
 - When we follow Jesus, Jesus gives us himself.
 - That means:
 - You don’t have to fear.
 - You don’t have to be alone.
 - And you can have true hope in what Christ has accomplished for you.

Conclusion:



- It's hard for us to imagine, but try to think about what it meant for Jesus to take on human form.
 - He never sinned, but he was willing to take on human weakness.
 - He had to humble himself.
 - He had to take the form of a servant.
 - He had to face sorrow and pain.
 - He had to carry the burden of our sins.
 - He had to face the wrath of God.
 - He had to die a painful death.
 - But he was willing to take on human form, to save us from our sins.

- Even more, what's amazing about Jesus coming to be with us, is that he came, even when we sinned against him.
 - Even when our hearts were against him.
 - The Bible says in Romans chapter 5:
 - **“But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”** Romans 5:8
 - God didn't send his Son, after we proved ourselves to him.
 - Rather, it's while we were sinners, even when mankind had no interest in him, that God sent his Son, to be with us.
 - God showed his love for us, while we were still sinners.

- And what makes Christianity unique is that, it's the only religion that says God comes to us and becomes one of us.
 - The religions of the world all teach that the way to heaven, or nirvana, or a better life in reincarnation is through following the law.



- You have to obey, and live a good life, and be as perfect as you can be, and then maybe you can reach God.
 - It's all about the law and not grace.
 - But Christianity is the only religion that says, you can't go to God.
 - It says, that you're a sinner, and you could never be good enough to reach God.
 - That's why God sent his one and only Son for you.
 - That's why John writes:
 - **“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...For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.”** John 1:14
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- When you trust in Jesus Christ and follow him, you'll see that he pours out his grace on you.
 - He'll give you grace on top of grace.
 - When you trust in Jesus, you'll see that his presence will always be with you.
 - He'll never forsake you, he'll never leave you.
 - And so, this morning, let's confess our sins to God.
 - And let's believe in the Lord Christ, and all that's he done for us, and let's worship our newborn King.