

John 1:17

- A. grace: Favour, favourable or benignant regard or its manifestation (now only on the part of a superior); favour or goodwill, in contradistinction to right or obligation, as the ground of a concession.
- B. (**JOH 1:17**) For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.
1. That grace and truth came by Jesus Christ flows from the fact of His deity: He alone is God manifest in the flesh. **JOH 1:3, 14 c/w 1TI 3:16.**
 2. Jesus Christ, not Moses, is *full of grace and truth*.
 3. It is of Jesus Christ's fulness we have all received, not Moses' fulness. **JOH 1:16.**
 4. Moses was a great and faithful servant but Christ is the great and faithful Son counted worthy of more glory. **HEB 3:1-6.**
 5. Moses was a sinner, not the sinless Son of God.
 - a. Moses could not save anyone from death in trespasses and sins since he himself was by nature dead in trespasses and sins.
 - b. Moses could not even bring God's people into their promised *earthly* inheritance because of his unbelief (**NUM 20**). That was left to Joshua/Jesus (**ACT 7:45**), and this is a pattern of eternal salvation by Jesus Christ Who alone brings us into our promised *eternal, heavenly* inheritance. **HEB 9:15; 1PE 1:3-4.**
 6. Moses received measured grace (**EXO 33:17-19**) but Jesus Christ is full of grace.
 7. Moses received and wrote truth (**PSA 119:142, 151**) but Jesus Christ is the truth. **JOH 14:6.**
 8. Moses nowhere implied that he was *full of grace and truth*. Such a claim would have been a claim of deity and Moses' own Law condemned such a claim. **EXO 20:3.**
- C. **JOH 1:17** does not mean that there was no grace or truth until Jesus Christ or that grace and truth were never noted in Moses' writings.
1. There are 73 occurrences of forms of grace/gracious in the O.T., 26 of them in Moses' writings, beginning with "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD" (**GEN 6:8**).
 - a. Remember that the account of Noah is that of one righteous man for whose sake only his household was saved from universal condemnation. Their salvation was owing to the righteousness of their federal head. **GEN 7:1.**
 - b. Noah and those for whom he was a federal head were temporarily buried in the ark and emerged to a new, cleansed earth.
 - c. What a fitting place to find the first mention of grace, which forms an outline of our salvation by the obedient righteousness of our federal Head, Jesus Christ. **ROM 5:19.**
 2. There was obviously truth before the coming of Jesus Christ which could be shown and known. **GEN 32:10; ISA 38:19.**
 3. **JOH 1:17** is setting forth a contrast between what Moses represents and what Jesus Christ represents.
- D. Consider the Law Covenant which came by Moses.
1. Dr. Scofield maintained that Israel's reception of that Law was a rash act on their part, as if God was doing them a disfavor by presenting it.
 2. But the Law was their chief advantage in the sight of the nations. **DEU 4:5-6.**
 3. The Law was spiritual and good. **ROM 7:14-16.**
 4. The fault was not with the Law Covenant but with men. **HEB 8:7-8.**
 5. Because the fault was sinful man,
 - a. The law was "...weak through the flesh..." (**ROM 8:3**).
 - b. Its "do and live" condition for justification put men under the curse. **GAL 3:10-12.**

- c. It made nothing perfect. **HEB 7:19.**
- d. Righteousness could not come by it. **GAL 3:21.**
- e. It was the glorious ministration of death and condemnation. **2CO 3:7-9.**
- 6. The Law was ever meant to be a temporary institution, a “gap filler” men were kept under until Jesus Christ. **GAL 3:19-25.**
- 7. It only regulated man’s doings; it did not quicken the inward man’s nature. We know this because:
 - a. Carnal man “...is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (**ROM 8:7**).
 - b. If the law could change the inward parts of man, there would have been no need for a New Covenant which writes the Law in their hearts. **HEB 8:8-10.**
 - c. Before God’s power makes a new living creature inwardly, man is *dead in trespasses and sins*, not just weak (**EPH 2:1**), and the dead are powerless.
- 8. The Law was profuse with religious service, sacrifices, rituals, etc.
 - a. They could not justify anyone to stand before God since they were all overwritten with the bondage of corruption themselves and *one cannot bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing*. **JOB 14:4.**
 - b. These things were not lies from God but veiled truth. They were light, but only moonlight: a dim reflection of the *Sun of righteousness* (**MAL 4:2**), the *day star* of unveiled truth that dispels all the shadows that implied Him. **2PE 1:19; 1JO 2:8.**
- E. Everything that came by the Law before Christ was somewhat of a thief and robber operating in the shadows, robbing God of glory and men of fulness. **JOH 10:7-10.**
 - 1. It is not that the Law was devoid of any grace, was evil or made up of lies: it is that it could not do by sinners’ works what grace alone can do: redeem man to God, quicken man’s nature and fit him for good works. **EPH 1:7; 2:4-10.**
 - 2. It is not that the Law was devoid of truth or glory, but the fact is that it did not testify of Moses but rather of Christ Whose covenant is the more excellent glory. **JOH 5:39; 2CO 3:7-10.**
- F. “The law of Moses, however excellent in itself, was little in comparison of the Gospel: as it proceeded from the justice and holiness of God, and was intended to convict men of sin, that the way of the Gospel might be the better prepared, it was a law of rigour, condemnation, and death: Rom 4:15; 2Co 3:7, 2Co 3:8. It was a law of shadows, types, and figures: Heb 10:1, and incapable of expiating sin by its sacrifices: Rom 8:3; Heb 7:18, Heb 7:19; Heb 10:1, Heb 10:11. But Christ has brought that grace which is opposed to condemnation: Rom 5:15, Rom 5:20, Rom 5:21; Rom 8:1; Gal 3:10; and he is himself the spirit and substance of all those shadows: Col 2:19; Heb 10:1.” (Adam Clarke Commentary)
- G. “Something of grace there was both in the ordinances that were instituted for Israel and the providences that occurred concerning Israel; but they were only shadows of good things to come, even of the grace that is to be *brought to us by the revelation of Jesus Christ*. He is the *true* paschal lamb, the *true* scape-goat, the *true* manna. They had grace in the picture; we have grace in the person, that is, *grace and truth*.” (Matthew Henry)