

4. JESUS

—Love & Truth

Love and truth are deeply woven into the character of God like a DNA helix from Genesis to Revelation. Psalm 117, the shortest psalm in the Bible, is the simplest example of this:

1. Praise the LORD, all nations; Extol Him, all peoples!
2. For His love is great toward us, and the truth of the LORD is everlasting. Praise the LORD!

Love: The Hebrew word, *chesed*, often translated lovingkindness, is the word for God's eternal, covenantal love. In Deuteronomy 7:7-9 God declared that he would keep his *chesed*-lovingkindness to the 1000th generation. God's love always involves his initiative, sacrifice, generosity, humility, compassion, forgiveness, service and many more countless qualities. As a core component for knowing Jesus it couldn't be more basic: "We loved because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19.)

Truth The Hebrew word, *emeth*, is usually translated in English by the words *truth* or *faithfulness*. It has the idea of God's truth, rightness and order. Out of God's *emeth*-truth spring all justice, judgment, righteousness, promises, and standards of holiness. In the Old Testament, God primarily revealed His truth through creation, through his prophets and through scripture. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is the fullness of both in word and deed.

Read John 1:14-18. Jesus is described as being full of both grace and truth, which appear to be the New Testament fulfillment of *chesed* and *emeth*.

How do you see love and truth or grace and truth relating to each other? What would it be like to be full of one but not the other? Can you think of any stories in the gospel where Jesus demonstrated both?

Love - *Jesus' teaching on love is actually pretty simple. How would you summarize it?*

Matthew 22:34-40

Luke 6:27-36

John 13:34-35 (15:12, 15:17)

Paul also had a lot to say about love, as did Peter and John in their letters. What do you notice?

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

1 Peter 4:8

1 John 4:7-12

Truth - *Jesus and his disciples also had a lot to say about truth. What do you learn?*

John 3:21

John 8:32

John 14:6

John 17:17-19

John 18:37-38

1 Peter 1:22

1 John 3:18-19

APPLICATION : How do you see love and truth (or grace and truth) being lived out in your personal experience? Are there people to whom you need to proactively display both?