



EXPOSITION

Monthly bulletin from Virginia Beach Theological Seminary



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From my window ...

A few days ago I read an article about the "obesity of Americans." According to one organization's research, America leads the world in average calories consumed per citizen at a whopping 3,770 calories per day! The gluttony of America is illustrated by the fact that the average American on Thanksgiving Day consumes 4,500 calories. In case you are wondering, the "calorie intake" recommended per day by dietitians is 2,000-2,400. After reading this, I wondered how Christian Americans are doing with their "truth intake." Are we feasting on God's Word? Maybe we should consider David's words: "How sweet are your words to my taste! Sweeter than honey to my mouth!" I pray that David's words will be our experience this month.



Pastors Daniel Steinman & Bill Wegner

Alumni in Ministry Spotlight

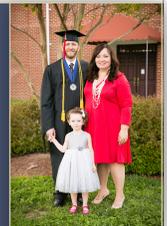
Pastors Daniel and Bill have been ministering together at Freedom Baptist Church in Chesapeake, Virginia for over twelve years. They are a dynamic duo - leading their flock, preaching the Word, and singing sacred melodies. Their ministry is one of integrity and all who know them value them as "encouragers" of the Body and genuine "servants" of the Lord. When I asked them to describe their ministry, Pastor Daniel said, *"The ministry of F.B.C. is one in which we seek to glorify our Triune God through a balanced ministry of the Word in the context of grace. The ministry of the Word is vital in our teaching, preaching, music, and outreach because we know it is God's Word and is the message of the Gospel."* Thank you Pastors Daniel and Bill for your examples of grace in the ministry!

NOV - DEC 2015 Thanksgiving Offering

GOAL - \$40,000 to help summer tuition costs

GIVEN in NOV - \$26,000

NEEDED in DEC - \$14,000





Scholar's Spectrum: "*Grace instead of Grace*" (Part 2)

What a strange phrase: "*grace instead of grace!*" It is found only in the opening words of the Gospel of John (1:16), and as Leon Morris remarks in his commentary on John (NICNT), "[it] is an unusual expression." The Greek phrase (χάριν ἀντί χάριτος, *charin anti charitos*) found in John 1:16 is unsatisfactorily translated in a variety of ways, such as, "grace upon grace" (ESV and NASB); "one blessing after another" (NIV 1984); "grace after grace" (Holman); and "grace added to grace" (Keener). However, as Morris properly notes, taken literally the phrase is translated, "grace instead of grace." So, what is John communicating to the reader with this peculiar phrase? Let me offer you **three connected ideas** which John 1:16-18 share.

First, when John used the preposition "instead of" (ἀντί, *anti*), he was communicating an idea of substitution, or something in exchange for another. When this preposition was used in secular Greek literature, Waltke summarizes, it always maintained the meaning of "opposite," and when used in a metaphorical sense it always signified "instead of, or in exchange for." Waltke concludes that when this preposition *anti* is used in the NT it is "consistent with its usage in the Greek literature outside the NT." If the Apostle John wanted to communicate grace being poured out as "one blessing upon another" then he would have certainly used the Greek preposition ἐπί (*epi*), meaning "upon or in addition to." However, by his usage of *anti* John is calling attention to the Gospel fact of 1:16-17: *the grace brought by Christ replaces the law*, as the NIV 2011 translates, "Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given" (see: *NIDNTTE*, 1:332). What this means is the grace brought by Jesus is now God's new redemptive plan. As 1:12 states, "As many as received him [Jesus] to them He [the Father] gave the right to become children of God, that is, for those who believe in His name."

Second, the Apostle John calls the law in 1:16-17 a "grace." This must not be overlooked! The law was a gracious, written, self-revelation of God given through Moses. What John is communicating is *not* that grace was absent from the law – quite the contrary – but with the advent of Jesus the world now has access to the fullest and richest exposition of grace, and it is in human form! Köstenberger correctly states, "Although the law is God's gracious revelation, it is not adequate as a vehicle of the 'true, ultimate grace' (1:17) that came through Jesus Christ." This "super-abundant grace in Jesus" – using Paul's comparative terminology – replaced the "gracious information" written by Moses being *both* the path and the power for fellowship with God.



Third, this “true, ultimate grace” not only finds its source in Jesus Christ, but it is also a pure and clear reflection of the nature of the Father Himself. According to Hebrews 10:1, the law was “only a shadow of what was coming, but not the very image.” John writes in 1:18 when Jesus came to earth he gave “a full account of the Father” – a perfect, visible, human presentation of the Father (Jn. 14:8-9). The grace that Christ displayed was, in the words of Hebrews (1:2), the exact representation of the Father. When Jesus was viewed, the Father was also seen. This makes the grace that is sourced in Christ a living and compelling demonstration of the true nature of the Father. Does this amaze you? It overwhelms me and causes me to want to think more deeply about this NT term “grace” . . . so, let’s talk more about this next month!