



WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

Bill Price, Pastor of Worship

July 9, 2023

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

The means of grace are God's appointed instruments by which the Holy Spirit enables believers to receive Christ and the benefits of redemption. Although He could have chosen to reveal Christ immediately to His people, He has determined instead to do so through certain means. God assigned **the Word, sacraments, and prayer** to be the foremost means by which He communicates Christ and His benefits to believers.

- Nick Batzig (Ligonier.org)

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

“The outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption are his ordinances, especially the word, sacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.”

Westminster Shorter Catechism 88.

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

How would you define the word “worship” (without referring to a particular location)?

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

A. W. Tozer: "Worship is to feel in your heart and express in some appropriate manner a humbling but delightful sense of admiring awe and astonished wonder and overpowering love in the presence of that most ancient Mystery...which we call Our Father Which Art in Heaven."

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

A. W. Tozer: "Worship is to feel in your heart and express in some appropriate manner a humbling but delightful sense of admiring awe and astonished wonder and overpowering love in the presence of that most ancient Mystery...which we call Our Father Which Art in Heaven."

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

A. W. Tozer: "Worship is to feel in your heart and express in some appropriate manner a **humbling** but **delightful** sense of admiring awe and astonished wonder and overpowering love in the presence of that most ancient Mystery...which we call Our Father Which Art in Heaven."

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

A. W. Tozer: "Worship is to feel in your heart and express in some appropriate manner a humbling but delightful sense of **admiring awe** and **astonished wonder** and **overpowering love** in the presence of that most ancient Mystery...which we call Our Father Which Art in Heaven."

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

Worship begins with God, it is initiated by God who delights in self-revelation.

The Bible makes it clear that man hides from God, runs from God and does not naturally seek God.

In worship, redeemed man responds to God with thanksgiving and praise for the grace that he has received.

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

What do we mean by the word “grace”?

Any favor, gift or blessing of God given solely out of the abundance of his kindness and without regard for any reward, merit or worth of the recipient.

“...but Noah **found grace** in the eyes of the Lord.”

What does Gen 6 *not* say about Noah?

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

Our purpose today:

God lavishes his grace upon us in innumerable ways each day of our lives. In this session we are looking specifically at how worship (and specifically corporate worship) is a means of grace.

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

1. Worship is made possible by grace.

Worship is only made possible because God desires to reveal himself to us. (Gen 3)

God's "call to worship" is a gracious invitation to enter into Triune communion. (Cf. Es 4:16)

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

2. Worship is a response to grace.

- Fundamental to a definition of worship is that it is a human response to divine initiative.
- Worshiping as a response to grace humbles us before the Giver of grace.

WORSHIP AS A MEANS OF GRACE

2. Worship is a response to grace.

- Humility is a worship-response to grace (the Tax Collector)
- Adoration is a worship-response to grace (Mary)
- Surrender is a worship-response to grace (Demoniac)

God is lavish in the grace we receive:

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, 16

3. What are the forms of grace that we receive?

- Gospel-grace, effectual for salvation.
- Sustaining grace for the trials of life.
- Comforting grace to face times of sorrow and loss.
(See David in 2 Sam 12:16-23)

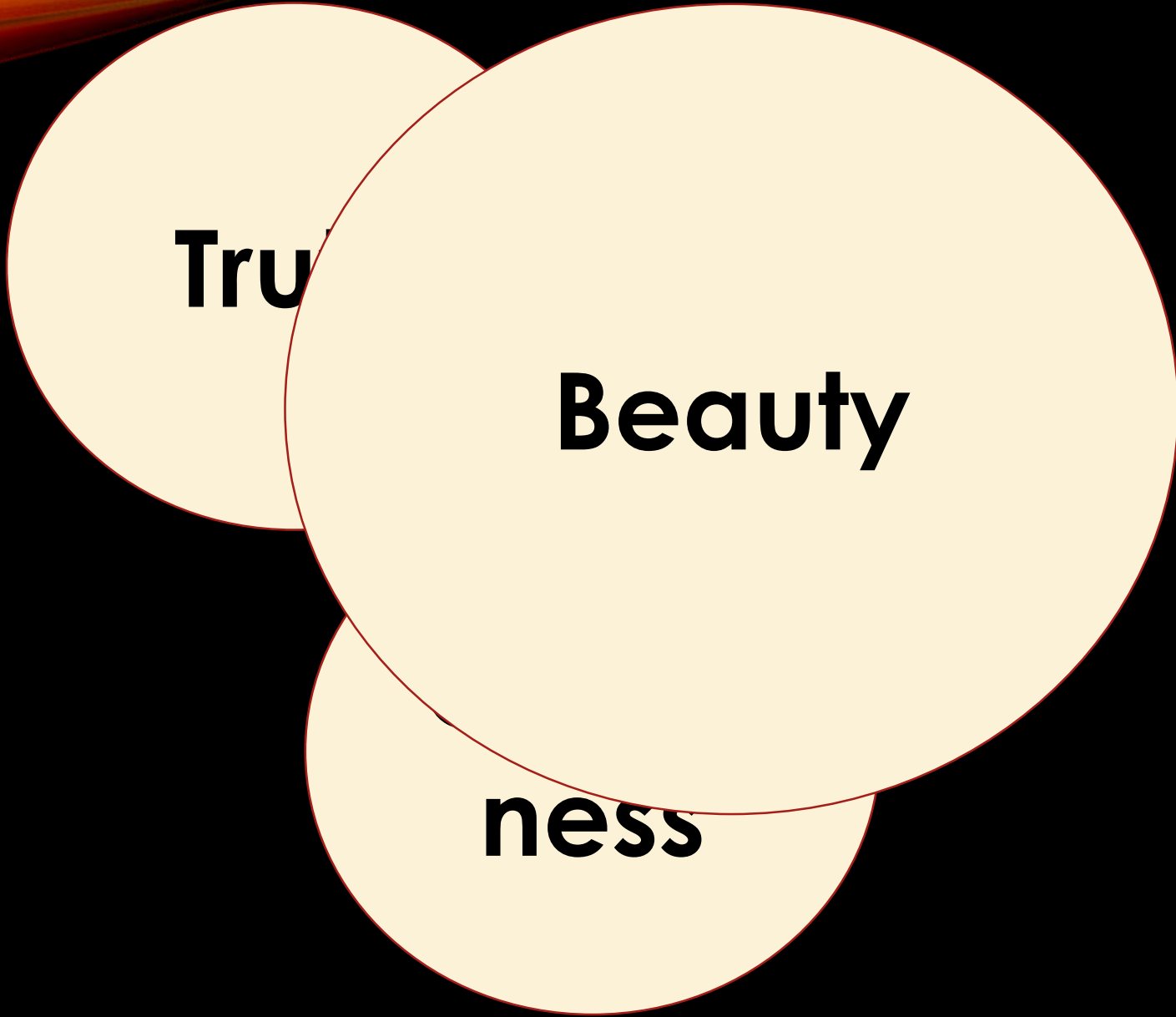
3. What are the forms of grace that we receive?
- Hope-grace that sets our eyes on eternity.
“Forgetting those things which are behind...”
 - Reconciling-grace. Matt 5:24 “...first, go and be reconciled...”
 - Commissioning-grace. Isa 6:8 “...also I heard the voice of the Lord saying....”

4. What are the conduits through which we receive God's grace in corporate worship?

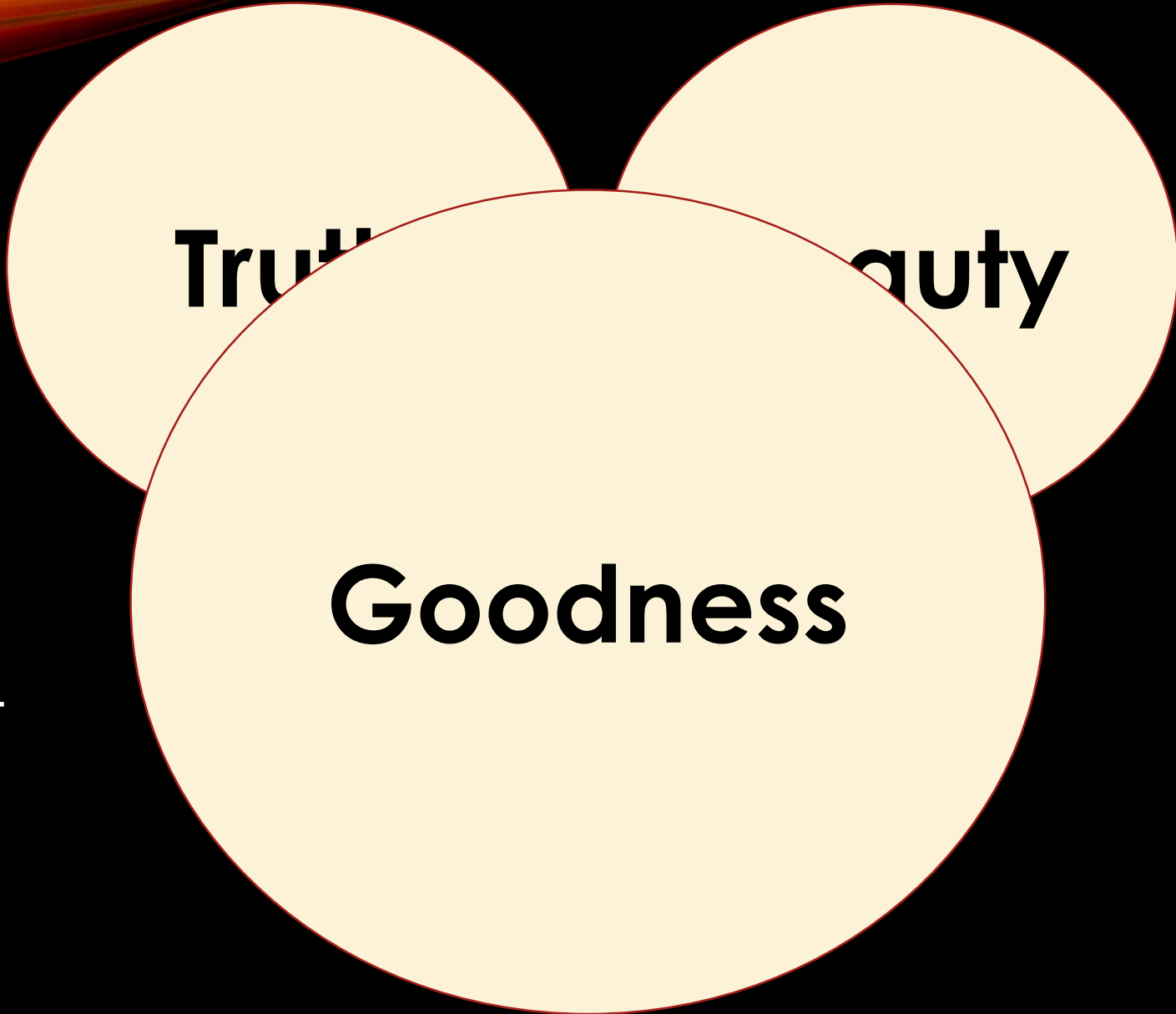
Truth

Beauty

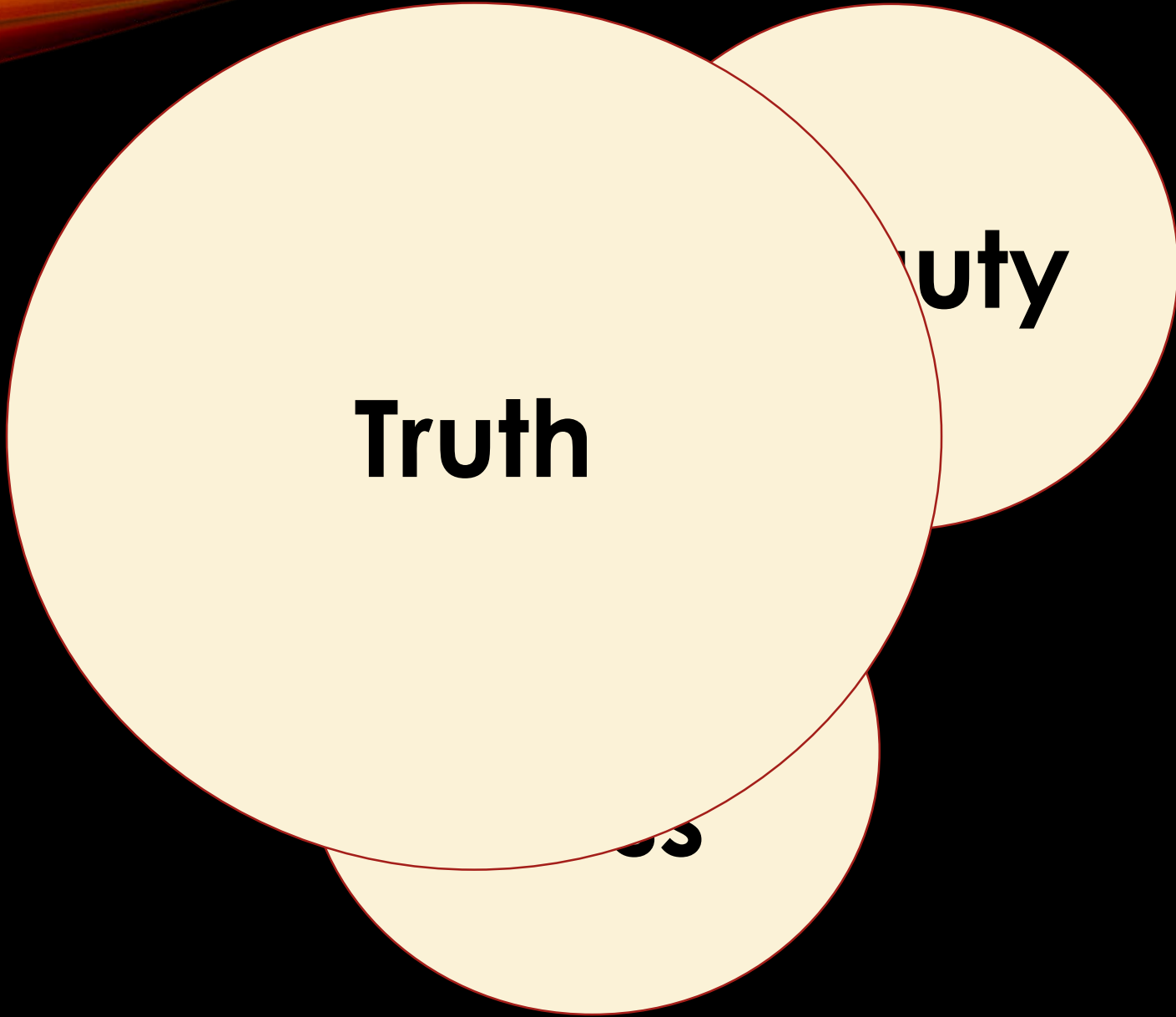
Goodness



Catholic
Anglican
Episcopal



Baptist
Methodist
Holiness



Presbyterian
Bible

Truth

Beauty

**Good-
ness**

A balanced approach

5. Through which elements of a worship service does God communicate his grace?

- Christian fellowship (the family unity)
- Christian hymnody (the family song)
- The Word (the family story)
- Prayer (the family practice)

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT FOR A MOMENT...

- Relate an experience of worship where you received God's grace, either at gathered or private worship.
- Relate an experience where beyond the normal instruction from the Word you sensed a specific leading or received special grace for a situation you were facing.

What are the various ways we respond to God's grace in gathered worship?

- Gratitude (root: "grace")
- Humility

Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed (Watts)

Verse 3

Well might the sun in darkness hide
And shut His glories in
When Christ the mighty Maker died
For man the creature's sin

Verse 4

Thus might I hide my blushing face
While Calvary's cross appears
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness
And melt mine eyes to tears

What are the various ways we respond to God's grace in gathered worship?

- Confession (Peter, Luke 5:8)
- Surrender (Isa 6:8)

6. What does grace accomplish in us?

- Grace reminds us of God's faithfulness in the past and gives us hope for the future. ("Here I raise mine Ebenezer...")
- Grace anchors our faith in the truth of the Word of God. (Mt 5:24-27)
- Grace orients us to kingdom priorities and kingdom purposes. (Col 3:1, 2)

6. What does grace accomplish in us?
- Grace forms the image of Christ in us.
 - The Bible repeatedly asserts that man inevitably becomes whatever he worships.

WE BECOME WHAT WE WORSHIP

The idols of the nations are silver and gold, made by human hands.

They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see.

They have ears, but cannot hear, nor is there breath in their mouths.

Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them.

Psalm 135:15-18

WE BECOME WHAT WE WORSHIP

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, ***we shall be like him***, for we shall see him as he is.

1 Jn 3:2

6. What does grace accomplish in us?
- Worship provides a gospel-template for every area of life.

A GOSPEL TEMPLATE FOR LIFE

God reveals his truth

We recognize and acknowledge our need

We respond with humility, confession, repentance

We are reconciled to God

We enter into a peace-filled, loving relationship

We strive to live in loving fellowship each day

[What if this were the template for all life's relationships?]

6. What does grace accomplish in us?

Grace provides a **gospel template** for our lives and calls us to live graciously toward others.

Do you have a gospel template for your work?

Do you have a gospel template for your marriage?

Do you have a gospel template for your children?

Some closing questions to consider:

1. In what ways might we shut ourselves off from the grace we should receive in worship?
2. What might we say of a person who professes to be a believer but is consistently absent from corporate worship?