

LOOKING UP!

By Matt Huddleston

During a British conference on comparative religions, experts worldwide debated what, if any, belief was unique to the Christian faith. They began eliminating possibilities. Incarnation? Other religions had different versions of gods appearing in human form. Resurrection? Again, other religions had accounts of return from death.

The debate went on for some time until C. S. Lewis wandered into the room. “What’s the rumpus about?” he asked and heard in reply that his colleagues were discussing Christianity’s unique contribution among world religions. Lewis responded, “Oh, that’s easy. It’s grace.” After some discussion, the conferees had to agree.

Author Philip Yancey adds, “The notion of God’s love coming to us free of charge, no strings attached, seems to go against every instinct of humanity. The Buddhist eightfold path, the Hindu doctrine of Karma, the Jewish covenant, and the Muslim code of law — each offers a way to earn approval. Only Christianity dares to make God’s love unconditional.”

Max Lucado highlights the power of grace this way, “Ponder the achievements of God. He doesn’t condone our sins, nor does he compromise his standard. He doesn’t ignore our rebellion, nor does he relax his demands. Rather than dismiss our sins, he assumes our sin and, incredibly, sentences himself. God’s holiness is honored. Our sin is punished, and we are redeemed. God does what we cannot do so we can be what we dare not dream: perfect before God.”

Look up and see his grace, freely offered on the cross and always.

SERMON NOTES

When I’m Good

September 12

Three _____ to _____ Eph. 3:20-21

Our _____

Our _____

Our _____

These three barriers are _____.

7 Truths about God—Ephesians 3:20-21

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

We connect with God when

Next Week:

SEPT. 19, 2021

FINAL MESSAGE

KYLE HOLTON

PERSONAL STUDY

It is rewarding to invest time each day in God's Word.

Mo Rom. 5:8

Our minds and our world will try to cut us down and disconnect us from God. He loved you and demonstrates that love while we were sinners. Honor God for taking the first step in your redemption.

Tu Titus 3:3

He who is forgiven much, loveth much (Luke 7:47). What difference is in your life now as a follower of Christ? Use Titus 3:3 to list the things that once entrapped you. Thank God for his forgiveness and new life.

We Romans 6:1-2

If he loved us when we were sinners, will he love us when we sin again? Yes, but is that how we want to live in response to his great example of love. Thank God for setting you free.

Th Titus 3:4-7

Reflect on the ever-present gift of grace from God; God, our Savior, appeared. He saved us- generously. Justified by grace, becoming heirs, we have the hope of eternal life. These words are power for today!

Fr Ephesians 3:20-21

Why do we turn God's gift into a work or task? How do we twist grace into achievement? Ask God to open your eyes today to the ways you work to earn his affection and let him show you his continual love.

Sa Titus 3:4-8

Our salvation is not because of your efforts and works. Salvation comes from God. The righteous things we do are to reflect our gratitude in our new, saved lives. Are you living by works or gratitude?

STUDY & DISCUSS

- Read Ephesians 3:20-21.
- How do we twist grace into achievement?
- Why do we turn God's gift into work or tasks?
- In what ways has our Christian heritage taught or demonstrated that we must earn our way into heaven?
- What have been the pros and cons of our societal emphasis on independence, self-reliance, and self-pride?
- Have you experienced an attitude of unworthiness? Who in your life has been so focused on the negative and never appreciated the good you were doing?
 - ◊ Have there been any long-term repercussions of such thinking?
- Reading Titus 3:3-8 shows the gift of salvation from God. How do we cheapen his gift when we focus on our works over his gift?
- Read Romans 6:1-4. How would remaining unchanged after experiencing God's grace demonstrate an ungrateful heart and mind?
- Have you ever thought, "God would have helped me if I had been more faithful or righteous?"