



THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

East Cape Bible College

Monday, 2nd June 18H00 – 19H00

Topic 5: - The Reformation

Presenter: Johan Smulders

OUR CONDOLENCES TO THE LENTZ FAMILY

Our sincere sympathy, thoughts and prayers go to Myra and the family on the passing on of a beloved husband, father and grandfather.

“My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?” John 14: 2

Song Leader: Braam Le Roux
Opening Prayer: Carry Hagemann
Closing Prayer: Rudi Le Roux
Servers: Jan, Ray, Carry, Rudi

Scripture Reading: Ray Calder
Lord’s Table: Jan Roberts
Attendance last Sunday: 33

GOD’S GRACE - John 10: 10

One Sunday morning a preacher set a rusty, bent, old bird cage by the pulpit. "I was walking through the town yesterday when I saw a young boy swinging this bird cage, with three little wild birds, shivering with cold and fright. I asked him, "What do you have there, son?" "Just some old birds," came the reply. "What are you going to do with them?" I asked. "Take 'em home and have fun with 'em," he answered. "I'm gonna tease 'em and pull out their feathers to make 'em fight. I'm gonna have a real good time."

"But you'll get tired of those birds sooner or later. What will you do then?" "Oh, I got some cats," said the little boy. "They like birds. I'll take 'em to them." The preacher was silent for a moment. "How much do you want for those birds, son?" "You don't want the birds, mister. They're just plain old field birds. They don't sing. They ain't even pretty!"

"How much?" he asked again. The boy sized up the preacher as if he were crazy and said, "\$10?" The preacher took out a ten-dollar bill and placed it in the boy's hand. Picking up the cage he gently carried it to the end of the alley where there was a tree and a grassy spot. He opened the door and set the birds free.

Then the preacher began to tell this story: One day Satan and Jesus were having a conversation. Satan was gloating and boasting. "Yes, sir, I just caught a world full of people down there. Set me a trap, used bait I knew they couldn't resist." "What are you going to do with them?" Jesus asked.

Satan replied, "Oh, I'm gonna have fun! Gonna teach them how to marry and divorce each other, to hate and abuse each other, to drink and smoke and curse. I'm gonna teach them how to invent guns and bombs and kill each other. I'm really gonna have fun!"

"And what will you do when you are done with them?" Jesus asked. "Oh, I'll kill 'em," Satan glared proudly. "How much do you want for them?" Jesus asked.

"Oh, you don't want those people. They ain't no good. You'll take them and they'll just hate you, spit on you, curse you and kill you. You don't want those people!" "How much?", Jesus asked again. Satan looked at him and sneered, "All your blood, your tears and your life."

Jesus said, "DONE!" Then he paid the price.

(With thanks to Audrey for this thought-provoking contribution.)

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SUNDAY TIMES:

BIBLE STUDIES: 09H00

WORSHIP: 10H00 TO 11H00

1ST JUNE 2025

Preacher: Johan Smulders

Sermon Topic: “Seeing Jesus Clearly”

Scripture reading: Luke 24: 28 – 35

Text: Proverbs 29: 18

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY - 9 am.

We are at present studying the book of Romans, with Johan facilitating the class. Please join us during this time of learning God’s Word.

SUNDAY MORNING CHILDREN’S

CLASS – 9 am

If you have any questions about this class, please speak to Shana.

LADIES BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday 4th June - 10 AM

This coming Wednesday will be a workshop.

PRAYER REQUESTS

So many of our congregation and loved ones have succumbed to the flu and other illnesses. There are many who need fervent prayers as they face physical, emotional and financial battles. Please add Stephen and the Lentz family to your personal prayer list. We give thanks to our Lord for answering our prayers in His time and in His way.

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you.” Deut. 31: 6

BIRTHDAY WISHES

Ann Cloete – 1 June

Stephen du Preez – 7 June

Blessings to you and may you feel the presence of the Lord as you celebrate your special day!

POTLUCK LUNCH

There will be a potluck lunch next Sunday, 8 June, after worship. Please join us in this special time of fellowship while enjoying your lunch. Ladies, please bring your favourite meal as usual. Ladies on duty are Sandra and Lorna.

Without God's grace, salvation is impossible!

The most illuminating scripture on this subject is John 1:17, where it says, "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." A logical conclusion after reading this passage would be: the Old Testament is about law and the New Testament is about grace. And to some extent, that is an accurate assumption. The Old Testament is definitely "law-focused" and the New Testament is absolutely "grace-filled."

But the bigger question is: Has God always been gracious? Or did Jesus' death and resurrection somehow alter His character? 2 Timothy 1: 9 sheds some valuable light on this topic, "He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done, but because of His own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time." God's grace is the foundation upon which the Gospel message is built. But we mustn't skim over the last four words of the passage above—before the beginning of time. Before God created mankind, He knew of our need to be rescued from sin. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ was not God's backup plan, His last resort or His "get out of jail free card." Absolutely EVERYTHING that happened between Adam's first breath and Jesus' death was part of God's gracious plan to redeem mankind.

The concept of God's grace—unmerited favor shown to unworthy men and women—is woven throughout the entirety of the Old Testament.

7 Examples of God's Grace in the Old Testament:

1. God's grace infuses Noah's Story.

"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen 6: 8).

Wickedness and evil were so rampant in the hearts of men that God actually regretted creating them. Wow! He was ready to wipe them out entirely, but there was ONE man who was righteous, faithful, and committed to walking with God. Noah was not a perfect man, yet God chose to save his family from destruction. That's grace!

2. God's grace endures in spite of Abraham and Sarah's unbelief.

"And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen 12: 3b).

Did you know that Abraham's fear and sense of self-preservation led him to distort the truth by saying Sarah was his sister (to save his own hide)? Did you know that Sarah laughed at God when he said she would give birth to a son in her old age? And then, after laughing at God, she encouraged her husband to sleep with another woman to fulfill the promise? Abraham and Sarah's lives were marked with disbelief and disobedience, yet God remained faithful to His promise. That's grace!

3. God's grace for Joseph gave him strength to persevere.

"You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good" (Gen 50: 20).

As Joseph's story unfolds, it's difficult to see God's grace in it all—despised by his brothers, sold into slavery, wrongly accused, left to rot in prison. But that's not at all how Joseph saw things. He reveals his perspective in Gen. 45: 7, "But God sent me ahead of you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance." God used difficult and trying circumstances to position Joseph as the savior of His people. That's grace!

4. Moses doubted God at every turn, yet God graciously guided him.

"But Moses said, 'Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else' (Ex 4: 13)."

Moses was as flawed as they come—arrogant, stubborn, and doubtful. Yet God faithfully walked with him, and as time passed, Moses learned how to faithfully obey. God used this blemished shepherd to lead His wayward sheep out of captivity. God chose to listen to and walk with a man who, in his youth, killed another with his bare hands. That's grace!

5. The Israelites repeatedly rebelled against God, yet He graciously rescued them.

"And he could bear Israel's misery no longer (Judges 10: 16)."

I tried to keep track of how often the Israelites grumbled against God, broke His commands, worshiped false idols, etc. - but I quickly lost count. Time and again they turned away from God, did whatever they wanted, lost God's protection, suffered great consequences, returned to God, and begged Him to rescue them. Over and over and over again! Sometimes there were lasting consequences for their poor decisions, but God showed more grace than was deserved (over and over and over again).

6. Rahab bravely asked God to save her (in spite of her past sins) and He did!

"The Lord your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below (Josh. 2: 11b)."

Rahab is referred to as "the harlot" three times over in scripture. She was a prostitute—a sinner unworthy of God's grace. But somewhere along the way, she heard tales of this God of Israel. So when the two spies sought shelter in her home, she bravely bargained for her life. She confessed her belief in their God and asked for their mercy. And they gave it willingly, to her and all of her family. In fact, she dwelled with the Israelites and faithfully served God the rest of her days. That's grace!

7. David lusted, stole, fornicated, lied, and killed—yet God saw his heart and loved him.

"Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin (Ps. 51: 1)"

David is the ultimate example of God's unmerited favor. But I've got to start by mentioning all of his merits. Because there are many. Just open up the book of Psalms, and you will be astounded by how deeply he loved God. In his heart of hearts, I don't think David ever strayed from his love for God. He just made some pretty terrible decisions along the way (haven't we all?). The key is he always turned from his sin and repented. And God forgave. That's grace!