

So today Jesus is inviting you, me, to remove a plank, so that we can see clearly in order to benefit and grace the people we meet this week.

We might begin thinking it is the other person who has the plank in their eye and I've just got a bit of sawdust. That's a great formula to live superior, condemning others. Thank God, in Jesus, I'm set free to see the plank that needs to be removed and is keeping me from extending grace to the people I'll meet this week.

So this Christmas are you ready for grace to come to town? This Christmas take some time to talk with Jesus that he might grow you in humility; removing those planks that blind you

to the joy of living in, and living out his grace.

Grace really is, relationally speaking, the unsettling solution for just about everything. And Jesus is full of grace. And he extended it to people who were nothing like him, and then he asked people like us who are nothing like him to extend it to people who are nothing like us and who may not even like us. So let's do that. This Christmas season let's do something unsettling. Let's be unsettling. Let's give to someone what they don't expect and what they perhaps don't necessarily deserve. And when

you do this, you will be like your Father in Heaven. You will be part of the unsettling solution. What amazing grace.

(Andy Stanley. North Point Ministries, USA)

22 December 2019

THE UNSETTLING SOLUTION

for just about Everything—4



Today we're in part four of our series: The Unsettling Solution For Just About Everything. And the unsettling solution is 'GRACE'. Grace, that underserved, unearned, unearnable, favour of God.

This series was by Andy Stanley from North Point Church in the US. And today Andy has an unsettling question for all those who follow Jesus. Here it is, 'Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?'

What's this got to do with 'GRACE' you might be asking; seeing 'Grace' relationally, is the

solution for just about everything.

If we turn Jesus' saying around, that I'm the one with the speck of sawdust and you're the one with the plank in your eye, what sort of attitude do I approach the other person with?

The word 'condescending' comes to mind. And that is hardly grace. I'm not approaching you with what is undeserved, unearned, unearnable, favour. I'm looking down on you; you poor thing, just let me help. Condescending doesn't feel like grace; does it?

Of course being condescending, isn't how Jesus comes to us. At Christmas we celebrate Jesus coming along side

us, as our very real, down-to-earth brother. I love hearing that he's not ashamed to be known as one of us. Jesus comes along side, and then pours his life into us that we might have life to the full.

Amazingly Jesus demonstrated; that's actually lived it out, demonstrated his love for us in this, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. That's amazing grace.

Jesus did not stand their superior to us; which he could have, but he chose not to. He rather chose to humble himself and serve us, so that we might benefit according to our needs at his expense. What amazing grace.

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

I hear Jesus saying to me; "Tim, I just want you to do for others what I have done for you." Not out of fear or guilt. Not to prove how good you are, but because I've freed you; live free. I've loved you; live loved. I've forgiven you, live forgiven. What joy Jesus intends for us to experience as we are liberated from the plank in our eye; the plank that blinds us to God's grace in Jesus.

unearned, unearnable, favour. That precious free gift in Jesus.

Jesus comes to liberate me from my inferiority complex which exhibits itself in my feeling superior! What a plank that is.

So Jesus invites us, in his grace, to first

**GRACE:
Undeserved, Unearned,
Unearnable Favour.**

take out the plank in our eye. First I've got to examine my own heart. It's not about trying to be nicer, more patient, more kind, I remove the plank in my eye only through God's grace.

Jesus liberates so that I don't act superior, but am free to walk along side of you, and joyfully live out this love I have in Jesus for your benefit.

So the more aware I am of what Jesus is

doing in me, yet to do in me, the less aware, the less bothered. The less offended I become.

The more aware you become of the planks that you need to remove, the easier it will be to extend grace to others because the less aware you will become of what God has yet to do in them because you have focused your attention on what God has yet to do in you, in me.

So I love to celebrate Christmas. At Christmas, grace came to earth. Grace came to earth to dwell with us in spite of us. Isn't it interesting that God was more broken-hearted over sin than he was put off by it?

Jesus didn't take sides. Jesus came alongside. Isn't that amazing?

Sadly there was one group of people who wouldn't let Jesus

come alongside. The people Jesus had the most problem with were people who represented graceless religion. Religious people whose planks made it impossible for them to see people the way Jesus saw them.

People who had so dumbed down God's law that they didn't believe they were in need of grace. People who had so twisted and manipulated the love of God, they didn't feel like they needed the grace of God. And Jesus had no patience with that group of people. I don't want to be one of those people; and it's only by God's grace; the grace that came to earth, that I'm able to remove that plank from my eye.

Without God's grace come to earth, I'm one of those people. It is so easy to stand above someone rather than alongside

them; one with them in God's grace and mercy.

Outside of God's grace and mercy my speech and attitude sounds condemning.

Thank God Jesus has come to heal me, to liberate me from condemning other people, that I might stand with them,

Jesus comes alongside.

introducing Jesus to them, that in that relationship his grace and mercy might liberate them from slavery into life; life live rich and full.

So the church; Jesus' community of faith, is most appealing when grace is most apparent. One of the reasons people might not accept your invitation this Christmas is that they've experienced a graceless community. Jesus' community of faith is

always more appealing when grace is most apparent. And we are that community every single day, every single place that we go.

That's where we get to live out God's underserved, unearned, unearnable favour through Jesus.

Notice grace isn't saying everything's fine, do what you want. That's not grace.

Grace is experiencing God's favour even though I don't deserve it, I haven't earned it, God's favour isn't for sale, but we have it to grow in through Jesus.

Jesus has come along side of each one of us that we might know God for who he really is and enjoy living life person to person. Why else would he have come in person?