

Don't Lose Heart: The Access

Ephesians 3:12-13

Theme: access

fallen condition: not good enough

Point: by grace we can draw near to God

App: live by grace

Intro: Paul is proclaiming the incalculable riches of Jesus [8], which is revealing to the universe [10] that the eternal purpose of God to make a dwelling place among rebels is finally accomplished in the death of Jesus [11]. Therefore, we have access to the Father's dwelling through Jesus [12].

προσαγογε - access

confident - an adjective modifying the *type* of access, specifically as one without fear

boldness - speaking without restraint

- a relationship in which you are able to approach someone who finds you acceptable, and is favorably disposed towards you

Why is “access” good news?

FCF: if “access” isn't good news to you, it may be because you already have a sense of...

Entitlement

Israel's predestination as a nation vs. Gentile outcasts
grandfathered into the faith...

born into a Christian family or church

Ezekiel 18:20 (HCSB)

A son won't suffer punishment for the father's iniquity, and a father won't suffer punishment for the son's iniquity. The righteousness of the righteous person will be on him, and the wickedness of the wicked person will be on him

Achievement

through good works

The prevailing worldview:

1. if I try harder, I will be satisfied
 1. community will make me satisfied
 2. relationship will make me satisfied
 3. revolution will make me satisfied
 4. legislation will make me satisfied
 5. alcohol will make me satisfied
 6. education will make me satisfied
 7. money will make me satisfied
 8. religion will be satisfied
 9. career will make me satisfied
 10. my children will make me satisfied
 1. the stories all are very typical, and they all fail.

But our good works are not good enough (whether by inheritance or merit):

conflict

The best ones are like filthy garments (Isaiah 64:6)

ex: saying something hurtful to a loved one--they don't want a gift card (good works)

we hate the Law, but do some of it for our own selfish means

But our good works do not cover up the debit of bad works (penance)

e.g. "I hate you...but maybe this \$25 gift card will smooth things over"

Objection: a loving God should just let it slide

Answer: The issue of justice and the kind old grandpa.

illustration: a just judge (if an evil judge can make righteous decisions, where did the morality come from?)

God is just and we are not at peace with him.

So how do love and justice reconcile when the object of both are a society of sinners?

redemption

Ivan Illich

"Neither revolution nor reformation can ultimately change a society, rather you must tell a new powerful tale, one so persuasive that it sweeps away the old myths and becomes the preferred story, one so inclusive that it gathers all the bits of our past and our present into a coherent whole, one that even shines some light into the future so that we can take the next step...If you want to change a society, then you have to tell an alternative story.

The good news is that alternative story...

Romans 3:21-26

But now, apart from the law, God's righteousness has been revealed—attested by the Law and the Prophets 22 —that is, God's righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ, to all who believe, since there is no distinction. 23 For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. 24 They are justified freely by His grace through the •redemption that is in Christ Jesus. 25 God presented Him as a •propitiation through faith in His blood, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His restraint God passed over the sins previously committed. 26 God presented Him to demonstrate His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be righteous and declare righteous the one who has faith in Jesus

pardon for rebels

(dad takes the fall for daughter)

The mystery of the Gospel:

1. you are a rebel who hates God, and are destroying yourself in your rebellion.
2. But God loved you in this way: he gave his Son to take the fall

Romans 5:1-2

declared righteous (by grace)

reconciled to God (peace)

given access to Him

By faith in His Son (12)

How do you know you've been saved? You begin to love the Law of God like honey on your lips.

"Faith is the gaze of the soul upon a saving God" - A.W. Tozer