



Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **AMEN**

Who do you look up to? I know that question will annoy some English majors with the dangling participle, but it is an important question. The essence of what we believe and value in life can be seen in those people that we do look up to. So, who do you look up to?

When we are kids, we looked up to our parents. Mom and dad were our gods. Our parents were wise, helpful and took good care of us. They were there in a crisis and when we just needed to feel safe. We wanted to grow up to be just like them. We dreamed of being an engineer or teacher, like they were. For fun we dressed up in their clothes and wanted to look just like them too. This I think was true for most of us, at least until we got to be teenagers. Then like many children do to their parents, I most likely shoved my parents down into the Valley of the Dumb, where they stayed until I was in my 20's.

But as we aged, we began to expand our circle of influence to our extended family. I remember Great Aunt Alma and can still smell her making donuts in her tiny kitchen. I went with my grandpa to work one day as he tended the bridge in downtown Milwaukee, opening it when a big boat came in.

Soon we came across more people like teachers, pastors and neighbors that showed us even more trails we wanted to emulate. They too became our role models and we looked up to them. My love of music goes back to my band director, Mr. DeRosier as he encouraged me to practice my flute, and our church organist, pastor's wife Astrid Schimmel. And my favorite teacher, Miss

Oliver, give me the love of learning with her broad knowledge and inquisitive attitude.

And as we age, I think we get more selective on who we look up to. Our scope of life leads us to have a world view of today and days gone by. Some of us even chose heroes from the past. I remember in school whenever I had to write a biography of a famous person, I always would pick Thomas Edison. Today, I don't even remember why but somehow, he intrigued me. When at St Olaf College, my heroes changed to the great thinkers. Descartes and his "cogito eros sum", "I think therefore I am" was probably the most influential for me. I too wanted to be a great thinker, like Plato, Aristotle, Hume, Kant and Kierkegaard.

Today, as I think about who I look up to, I would have to include Martin Luther for being a reformer, someone who wanted to change things for the better, Thomas Jefferson as a designer of our republic, Max Lucado for being a great spokesman that over and over again shows us how to let Jesus into our lives and the list could go on.

Who do you look up to? That is the question for this Pentecost Sunday. But the big problem is that whether you look up to a famous theologian, famous teacher, famous baseball player, famous scientist, famous philanthropist, they are all flawed in one way or another. They are all human and suffer from the stigma of human sinfulness.

Good news here folks is that the Christian faith has an answer: Jesus Christ is that answer. He was much more than a teacher, prophet, healer or saint. Jesus is the son of God, who died for our sins and rose from the dead that we might have the gracious gifts of forgiveness, abundant and everlasting life. And today we celebrate his giving to us another gift, the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Yes, Jesus died at the hands of the people. He went to his death with our sin on his shoulders. And he came alive again to overcome death and then ascended to heaven to sit at the right hand of his Father Almighty. Jesus is surely someone to look up to. And now we also have the Advocate, that has come as Jesus promised. He was sent to us from his Father. We now have God in the form of the Holy Spirit to look up to. And as our reading for today tells us, verse 12, "he will guide you into all the truth." And truth is that we have the best of all worlds. We have a God that created us and this wonderful world that we live in. We have Jesus, who came to earth to train us up in the way we should go. He was the promised one, who is our Lord and Savior. And

we would be remiss to not look up to the Holy Spirit who is the ever-present breath of God for all people.

He is our advocate, our counselor, our comforter, our intercessor and our helper. He offers power and wisdom that cannot be surpassed anywhere in our human world. The Holy Spirit is among us to make known to us our Lord and Savior Jesus who came from God. Only the Holy Spirit will expose the world to us for what it is, a human experience.

And as we live in this world, we will face challenges to our faith and practice. We will all have to discern what is right and what is wrong. We will all have to discern what and whom to look up too to answer our concerning issues. The Holy Spirit will “declare to you things that are to come” verse 13 says. The Spirit will help us make sense of where we are headed and how to answer the tough questions of our day: What is our Christian response to cloning, to abortion, to euthanasia, to racism? It is the Holy Spirit that keeps God’s word alive and fresh through every changing circumstance that approaches us in this world.

You see our triune God is an awesome God who loves us and cares for us. And so, I urge you to keep your eyes on God. Look up to Him in all circumstances. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. **AMEN**