

8/30/20 - Titus 3:1-8 - "The Transforming Power of God"

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Date: 30 August 2020

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[0 : 00] Welcome. Welcome, everyone. If you are new with us, a special welcome to you. Thank you for joining us today. And my hope right now is that the ancient words will impart today. That was a fantastic song just to dwell on and to reflect on.

But if you are new with us today, how we do things is we pretty much have our Bibles open. Usually we have Bibles in the chairs available to you, but right now, just due to germs and viruses, we're refraining from having Bibles.

But if you have your Bibles, Bible apps, or bring in your own Bible, have it open and keep it open. We pretty much just stay there. Put your finger there, and we'll be in Scripture.

And let's read the passage today in its entirety. And we are starting chapter 3, and this is the second to last sermon that we have in the book of Titus.

So look with me in Titus chapter 3, starting at verse 1. I'll give you a moment.

[1 : 19] Verse 1 says, Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures. Passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others, and hating one another.

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.

So that, being justified by His grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things.

So that, those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

[2 : 46] This is the word of the Lord. Let's pray. Father, we are grateful to be gathered here.

And we don't take this assembly for granted. We don't take one another's lives and struggles and joys for granted.

Father, we value one another. We care for one another. This is a one another church. You have made this so, according to your word. Lord, help us at this time to look at Scripture, and not just look at, with all these presuppositions of what we might think that it's saying, but Father, help us to come under your word today, and allow it to teach us and to instruct our lives as you intended your word to do.

Father, be with us at this time. Help us, Lord, through the power of your Holy Spirit, to understand your word and how it applies to us today. Help us to be challenged today and encouraged and often corrected by your word.

We pray this in Jesus' holy and mighty name. Amen. There's fewer phrases that can be said that can get people amped up, unlike the word or phrase, game time.

[4 : 13] When you tell a football player in high school and it's game time, all of a sudden it just changes that attitude, knowing what to prepare for. In our kids' life, they like the jock jam soundtrack for whatever reason.

And you know the famous saying in boxing, let's get ready to rumble. And you know, the longer he holds that out, we think two things.

We think, is he ever going to run out of breath? And then we also think, man, we're ready. We're ready to get in the game. We're ready to go out and throw our left and our right hook.

And this is often a song that is heard within our own family. But there's something within those words that we hear that brings to our minds sort of like a readiness that is to come, a preparedness, and that being an anticipation of what's to come.

It's game time. Let's get ready to rumble. Let's go. At this point in Paul's letter to young Titus, he gives him a strong reminder to hold to.

[5 : 26] And the central concern of his reminder is that if he neglects Paul's instructions, friends, previously, evangelism is essentially at stake.

Evangelism being the proclamation of the good news. Evangelism is at stake. And as we reach this final chapter in Titus, in Titus chapter 3, we kind of reach a point where Paul brings into view the importance of our walk matching our message.

There's a continuity between our message and our walk. They don't contradict one another, but they verify one another. They're linked to how we handle ourselves. And today, Paul zeroes into the essence of the new birth, what's known as the new birth.

And we'll talk about that in a minute if that might be something new to you. And also, not only the essence of the new birth, but also the expression, the evidence of that new birth in our lives.

And this text actually forms what is known as like a sandwich for any literary scholars or Bible readers.

[6 : 34] This is known as a biblical chiasm. It's the way that the author structures words, which drive emphasis at this sort of apex within the chiasm. So each and every verse sort of are forming an arrow to a main point, which Paul uses often.

And we see it a lot in the gospel writings, in the New Testament writings. And so we're going to divide this sandwich, we'll put, say, into three parts.

And we're going to be keeping in mind the message matching our walk this entire time. And so what we're going to do is look at section one, which I'm calling a virtuous reminder.

And we're going to be looking at verse one through three. So like I said, keep your Bibles open. Keep your finger there in the text, and we're going to be reading through. Verse one says, Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.

And obviously, we see a contextual marker here. Remind them. Remind them. Obviously, there's something that's emphasizing the flow of the verses from the previous section, of the essence of that reminder from 11 to 15, which brings Paul into sort of like an application in his letter.

[8 : 09] Often, Paul will dump this theological dump truck on you, where he's just explaining all sorts of different lines of theology and doctrine. And then all of a sudden, it's like, this is what it means.

And this is how to apply it. Often within his writings, he does that. He does that in a way of critical examination and critical thought. And then says, here, this is how to apply it.

Essentially, this is the part in the letter that we reach today in chapter 3. And we have what I've observed within this passage as four departments of virtues. And I'm going to have them on the screen for any note takers.

Hopefully, that looks right on the live stream. But four virtue departments of gospel witness. We see the first one being that of submission and obedience in verse 1.

We see that also in verse 1 of being ready for every good work. And we see in verse 2, not speaking evil or being quarrelsome. And verse 2, again, being gentle and courteous.

[9 : 14] There's often Christianity today gets a bad rap from time to time. If you could imagine sometimes the news headlines and things that you see on social media.

You know, the church can often get a bad rap from time to time. But we see here a certain witness. Four virtue departments of the gospel witness.

And the first one being submission. Let's look at that for a minute. Rather than being respected by others, being known for being submissive and obedient to authority, the church often fights the wrong battles at the wrong times.

For instance, Christians aren't to be anarchists, essentially. Neither inside the church nor outside the church. Not inside the church regarding elders as being the authority.

Not outside the church with judges, with police, with government authorities in the secular government. Within the church, there's a God-given direction within our assembly and all churches that have existed since the instructions of Paul to these early churches.

[10 : 23] That is for your good. Essentially, or especially that being the elder rule within the church. Especially when there's a plurality of elders, when you have a group of men that are devoted to prayer, that are devoted to the ministry of the word, who have an agreed-upon direction of where the Lord is leading.

And often, there's no obedience in some churches. And some churches find it easier to solve problems by just booting out the mean elders and things like that.

And that's often a problem. But what we see usually in the New Testament church, our current day and age church, it less has often to do with the authority of the elders but insubordination of the members.

So it's kind of like a mix-up where we kind of observe that within the church. And that is a problem at large within the church. But we also see submission in the context of not only the elders and the established churches that Titus is to be establishing in Crete.

We also see in this passage that Christians ought to be submissive in the world, outside of the church. And oftentimes in persecution, the church is marked by actually what Mark Dever labels as the church being fish that have upstream muscles.

[11 : 43] Like that the church is meant to swim upstream. We're capable of swimming upstream. Especially when the reign of Nero is putting Christians in jail. We kind of just say, okay, well, I'm walking into the cell.

Put me in jail. I'm still going to be doing what I want to do and preach the gospel. So the church has upstream muscles. But Mark Dever actually comments saying that often the church flexes those upstream muscles at the wrong time.

And choosing the wrong battles to face. And actually there's a situation going on right now in California with John MacArthur. And now I want us to note that being in Ohio is different than being in California.

He has a whole different context. He has a whole different state and government. And we have to acknowledge that he has found reason to fight a battle in California, which the government is saying that he is now allowed to assemble in a church indoors.

So that is his battle. But even John MacArthur is quoted on this passage that submission, quote, submission to the authority of Scripture demands submission to human authorities as part of a Christian's testimony.

[12 : 54] Submission to the authority of Scripture demands submission to human authorities as part of Christian testimony. The second virtue here is being ready for gospel witness.

Often going along the lines like the church has kind of missed this at various points in life and church history. Rather than being ready for every good work, sometimes the church can just become isolated.

Sort of just spiritually isolated from the world. Saying that unless you come to them, you're not going to experience Jesus rather than Jesus going to others. And we kind of get claustrophobic with inside of our walls.

And often, I mean, I'm prone to it. I just had a conversation about this the other day of how I was in a kind of like a doctrinal debate. And I'm like, you know what?

You know how much time we have spent in this debate? We could have been down at YSU spreading the gospel to some students. And how silly sometimes we can spend so much time in these debates and become so isolated and missing the work.

[13 : 58] Missing the servant work that the church ought to be displaying and essentially taking a break. Sometimes we can be busy doing potlucks. Busy doing theological debates that we neglect the lost around us.

And naturally become detached from the mission of the church, which is known and identified as a great commission in Matthew 28. As the disciples were commissioned to the gospel work.

And we also see the third virtue as being that of speech and quarreling. And rather than being known as gentle people, the church becomes marked by harsh language, harsh actions, and picking fights and dividing.

And the debaters of the church are the ones that kind of stand out at times. Kind of out to prove other people right. But remember, in a previous message, I don't know if I should quiz you.

If you do get quizzed, I'll give you a free coffee for a month. But I said, one of the main points of that message was, our aim as Christians is not to win arguments, but to win, does anybody know?

[15 : 10] Consciences. Do you remember that? Our aim as Christians is not to win arguments, but to win consciences for Jesus. And that is so true.

So, rather than being known for listening to an opposing view, possibly an atheist view of what they believe, the church is always known for talking without listening.

Better to be slow to speak and quick to listen. The art of listening is actually half the battle in evangelism and being effective outside of these walls. But the truth is, if you really want to hear people, if you want people to hear you, you have to hear them.

In order to have ears listening to your message, you have to hear their message. And not just listening to respond, as sometimes we are prone to do. Just getting all this ammo ready to fire back. We know exactly the corner they're taking in their argument.

But listening and having compassion and truly caring for one another outside of these walls. And we also see in this four virtue assessment, the fourth one being to show gentleness and courtesy.

[16 : 21] Known as being humble. Rather than being known as humble people, the church is known as some of the most prideful holy rollers that exist sometimes in our day and age.

That we have it all together. Look at those Christians having their potlucks. You know, whatever. You know, just passing our witness off because we're so isolated.

And sometimes we even express it in the way we act. That we are better than others. Also known as elitist. But there are the virtues of the church that ought to be practiced.

We should take note of them. That's why I put them up on the screen. We should take note of them to be practiced by all for the sake of gospel witness of the church. Now, this is not saying, church, that we are to compromise upon our convictions in order to appease others in the world.

Or to win people for Jesus. No. We look to Jesus, who was a prime example of both boldness and humility. And it takes discernment to know as a church which hat to wear for which circumstance.

[17 : 34] Does this call for boldness? Does this call for gentleness? So, looking at verse 1 through 2, remind them to be submissive to the virtues. Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities.

To be obedient. To obey those in authority. To be ready for every good work. To be active in the field. Not too concerned. I mean, building community is good. But if that's all we're doing is building community.

I mean, my golly, we're missing it. And to speak evil of no one. To avoid quarreling. To be gentle. And also to show perfect courtesy towards all people.

To be humble. The truth is, when we know who we used to be. Sort of like the vices of our life that used to captivate us in our sin.

It sort of guides our lives in this virtuous manner. That we have no reason to boast. We are nobody. All we are is because of Jesus Christ.

[18 : 33] And this is why Paul continues in verse 3. He says, look with me in your word. For we ourselves were once foolish. Disobedient. Led astray.

Slaves to various passions and pleasures. Passing our days in malice and envy. Hated by others. And hating one another. In other words, church.

Who do we think we are at times? Who do we think we are? Verse 3 gives us a graphic depiction of human depravity, doesn't it? If Paul is identifying with this.

If you know any history of Paul. He was no character to boast about before Jesus saved him. Paul is identifying with this.

And he's also identifying Titus in this manner too. And he also identifies all of us. Each one of us gathered here today. For we ourselves were once all of these things.

[19 : 35] Human depravity. And how often we need a reality check from time to time. And I believe this text gives us a very good reality check at this moment. This list of vices of human depravity is startling.

And I believe for good reason. Because we need to be woken up from time to time. This is the beauty of expositional teaching too. Because this isn't my agenda. This is the agenda of scripture. And the agenda of the Holy Spirit through Paul's writings.

I mean it's true. I've said it multiple times. Maybe I'm a broken record player. But in order for us to be reminded of who we are. We often need to be reminded of who we used to be.

I've said that multiple times from the stage. And it's very important for us to take heed of. This is essentially an anchor in our lives. When the church can look at ourselves in the mirror. And truly see that we have no reason to boast at all.

Charles Spurgeon quoted in the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Back in the day. He said, Do not let me talk about these things this morning.

[20 : 37] While you listen to me without feeling. I want you to be turning over the pages of your old life. And joining with Paul and the rest of us.

In our sad confession of former pleasure and evil. In order, even Charles Spurgeon, years and years ago. Saw the importance of this.

To be turning the pages of our old life. In order to guide our virtuous gospel witness in this life. Now this is not saying that elders then are not to compromise the call of rebuking and correcting.

Because we're supposed to be gentle. It doesn't say anywhere in this text about tolerance. If anything, Titus' commission in Crete was to actually not tolerate the divisiveness within Crete.

That was happening in the churches. The aim of an elder is not to beat people up. But to help them grow into these virtuous Christians. Who are to witness the gospel to those around. And so here we have a very sobering list of vices to remind us all.

[21 : 45] Of the fuel which brings a healthy perspective of our virtues. And this sort of truth naturally leads us into that very miracle and act of God saving us from our mess and cleansing us.

And we see that in the second point this morning. Of the cleansing of our filth. In verse 4 as it continues. It reads, look with me.

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us. Not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy.

By the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit. You see an important word here. The first word in this verse. But. He's correcting the flow of thoughts.

Yeah, you can be religious and just beat yourself up every day. Of how sinful you once were. Yeah, you could. That's a choice. You're more than welcome to do that.

[22 : 50] But. As being children of God. Who have been changed. By the goodness and loving kindness of God. Of our Savior appearing. We see.

That being his first incarnation. Incarnation on earth. In verse 5. That he saved us. He didn't leave us that way. He beckoned us to come in our mess.

But he also calls us to. He transforms. And this has nothing to do with anything that we have done. Goodness and loving kindness emphasize salvation by grace alone.

And as verse 5 says. Not by works. But according to his own mercy. I want to pause there for just a couple minutes and talk about that.

Because what comes to our minds often. As Christians. When you think about this. About mercy. About grace. Often what comes into our minds is like a courtroom setting.

[23 : 49] Hopefully you haven't necessarily been in a courtroom. But for those of us who have been in courtrooms. You know it can be pretty stressful. Especially if you're up on the stand. If anybody who has had such a past.

That has led to actually being on trial. As a guilty person. And sitting on that stand. Feeling the weight. Feeling the judge.

Knowing that this comes down to evidence. And every Christian. Who has come to know Jesus Christ. Once sat upon that stand.

With sweat dripping from their face. With pressure. With that heart racing. Knowing that man. I'm not going to make it out of this courtroom. There's no tomorrow.

And knowing that all the evidence has been stacked against you. But Jesus comes walking through the back door of that courtroom. And says. Release him.

[24 : 48] I will serve the penalty for him. All that evidence can be pinned to me. All the blame can be pinned to me. And I will essentially die in the place of the holy and just penalty for sin.

I will take this man's place. I will take this woman's place. Man. Man. That really hit me this morning.

Verse 5 says. Verse 6 continues here. Whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior. This is all of his doing. It was poured out upon him.

This recalls Ephesians 2. Verse 4. But God. Being rich in mercy. Because of the great love. With which he loved us.

Even when we were dead in our trespasses. Made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. And raised us up. And raised us up with him.

[25 : 50] And seated us with him. In the heavenly places in Jesus Christ. Without faith in Jesus Christ. Mankind is hopeless. This is not my opinion.

But this. But as we submit to the authority of God's word. This is beyond opinion church. This isn't known as hate speech. This is a speech of hope. That when we proclaim this.

It's not to beat other people up. But we're trying to rescue people. There's a dead end sign. There's a cliff sign. That the world is going towards. And when we go out into the world. We know that we're saying.

Warning. This road leads to death. This is biblical fact. There is nothing. No good work that can save us.

It is all the work of grace. Vonnie Bonkham. If you don't have a Vonnie Bonkham book. In your bookshelves at home. I encourage you to. Maybe flip on Amazon. And get one. He is a very.

[26 : 50] Very intelligent theologian. And he commented. Along these lines. Saying hell. Will be filled with people. Who didn't smoke. Who didn't cuss.

And. May have even been baptized. Why? He says. Because. None of those things. Makes someone a Christian. Think about that.

Warren Buffett. Back in 2006. I was about a senior. In high school. The world's. Second richest man. At that time. Announced. That he would.

Donate 85% of his. 44 billion. Fortune. To five. Charitable organizations. So he would disperse. 85% of his.

44 billion estate. To five. Charitable organizations. And. So we can understand. That. I did the math. For you. So that means. 37 billion dollars.

[27 : 50] Was going out of his. Bank account. And that. 7.4 billion. Would be going. To five. Organizations. What would he have left? 6.6 billion.

I mean. I still think he's doing. Pretty well. With 6.6 billion dollars. I mean. It's coming from a guy. Who'll take a million dollars. I can help pay off some debt. And maybe. Get some interest occurring. For.

To pay for college. For kids. But commenting on this. Extreme level of generosity. Warren Buffett. Commented on this. Back in 2006.

And he said. There are more. Than one way. There's more than one way. To get to heaven. But this is a great way. And quite mistaken.

He was. Even in the midst of his. Great. Tremendous. Charitable. Donation. So what's the truth. Church. According to.

[28 : 46] To Paul's words in Titus. And I want you to hear me today. Church. Our witness. Must be both. That of boldness. But also. Gentleness. That we should.

We should be aimed. In those two. Different departments. And have the discernment. Of when to use. Either of them. Because we know. That we have no reason to vote. We know who we once were.

So when we. Are expressing. The Christian virtues. Of our gospel witness. We see that. It is one of boldness. But also gentleness. However.

What is the message though? According. To this verse. We see number one. I actually have the. Essential truths. We see two essential truths. In this passage. That number one.

Works don't save. And number two. God's mercy saves. And this might seem like. Oh yeah. Thanks. High five Brent. For those great words. But. This is a problem.

[29 : 41] In the church today. This is a problem. In the world today. It's not my. My opinion. These are surveys. Being done. Among the secular culture.

A lot of people. Think they're going to heaven. Number one. Works don't save. Ephesians 2. Eight. Eight through nine. Says.

For by grace. You have been saved. Through. Faith. And this is not. Of your own doing. It is a gift. Of God. Not a result. Of works. So that no one. May boast. And looking at.

Romans 3. Verse 19. Through 28. I'm going to paraphrase. That bulk of text. But. Essentially. It talks about. The law. And the relationship. Of the law. With mankind.

Saying that. Mankind. Is held accountable. By the standards. Of the law. And the law. Brings us. To a knowledge. Of sin. And the Old Testament.

[30 : 35] Bears witness. To the righteousness. Of God. Apart from the law. But through Jesus. That Jesus. Is the only way. All have sins. And fall short.

We are not saved. By the law. Of works. We are saved. By according to. Romans 3. Verse 27. We are saved. By the law. Of faith.

And we see. That God's mercy. Saves. In this essential. Christian truth. Only mercy. Saves. Remember. We just read that. That verse. In Ephesians 2. 4 through 6.

But God. Being rich in mercy. Because of the great love. With which he loved us. Even when we were dead. In our trespasses. Made us alive. Together with Christ. By grace. You have been saved.

And raised us up. With him. And seated us. With him. In the heavenly places. In Jesus Christ. You can't forget. 1st Timothy 1.13. Formerly. Formerly.

[31 : 28] We. I was a blasphemer. Persecutor. An insolent opponent. But I received mercy. Because I had acted. Ignorantly. In my unbelief. I just did not know. Until the law. Was made known to me.

1st Peter 1.3. Blessed be the God. The father of our. Of our Lord. Jesus Christ. According to his great. Mercy. He has caused us. To be born again. To a living hope. Through the resurrection.

Of Jesus Christ. From the dead. In 1st Peter 2.10. Once you were not a people. But now you are God's people. Once you had not received mercy. But now.

You have. Received. Mercy. Works don't save. Church. Only God's mercy saves. The good part.

Is that. When God saves us. He doesn't just. Try to make us smell. A little better. You know. Perfume a corpse. Essentially. He doesn't just.

[32 : 24] Try to make it. Dress us up. In a cute new outfit. You know. Give that guy. A blazer. That'll. Clean him up. Have him shave. A little bit. No. He goes straight. For the heart.

When God saves us. He goes. Straight. To the heart. And due to a late night conversation. I feel. Actually called to. Share this with you. It's from a. A book that a brother in the Lord. Is.

Shared with me. Last night. As he. Is anticipating the sermon. Today. And it's from. A.W. Pink. In his book. Leanings in the Godhead. I want you to.

Think about this. Reflect on it. I'm going to try not to go too fast through it. But it's a little excerpt. And it says. God is not. Known by the intellect. God is spirit.

According to John 4. 24. And therefore. Can only be known spiritually. But fallen man. Man is not spiritual. He is carnal. He is dead to all that is spiritual.

[33 : 18] Unless he is born again. Supernaturally. Brought from death. To life. Miraculously. Translated. Out of darkness. Into light. He cannot even see.

The things of God. According to John 3. 3. Still less. Apprehended. Still less. Apprehend them. The Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit. Has to shine. In their. Our hearts. Not just from an intellectual level. But from a spiritual level. That we cannot see. Has to shine within our hearts.

To give us knowledge. Of the glory of God. In the face of Jesus Christ. But even the spiritual knowledge. Is fragmentary. The regenerated soul. The new birth.

Has to grow. In grace. And in the knowledge. Of the Lord Jesus. The principle of. The principle of. Prayer and aim. Of Christians. Should be to. Walk.

[34 : 11] Worthy. Of the Lord. Unto all pleasing. Being able. Being fruitful. In every good work. And increasing. In the knowledge. Of God. In the knowledge. Essentially.

It's saying. The very problem. That Nicodemus had. Remember our passage. In John. John 3. In that late night visits. From Nicodemus.

Nicodemus was one. Who couldn't wrap his head. Around this message. The fact. That his law keeping. And his intellect. Wasn't good enough. To get him into heaven. That Jesus instructed him.

To be born again. Also known as. From a big word. Christianese word. Regenerative. That's something. That happens. Deep within us. By the Holy Spirit. When we come to know Jesus.

And this is something. Deep within us. That God deals with. And it transforms us. Specifically. Our hearts. Ezekiel 36. Anticipated this.

[35 : 08] Very thing. When he says. In Ezekiel 36. 25. Then I will sprinkle. Clean water. On you. And you will be clean. I will cleanse you. From all your filthiness. And from all your idols.

Moreover. I will give you. A new heart. And put a. New spirit. Within you. And I will remove. The heart of stone.

From your flesh. And give you. A heart of flesh. I will put my spirit. Within you. And cause you. To walk. In my statutes. And you. Will be careful.

To observe. My ordinances. Salvation. Salvation occurs. Through divine cleansing. Which. Begins. Within us all.

Before he cleanses. Our person. From the outside. We need a good. Scrubbing on the inside. And not only that. He needs to replace. What's on the inside. Not a heart of stone. But with a heart.

[36 : 03] Of flesh. And this cleanses. Our. And changes. Our status. Our identity. And allows. Our lives. To reflect.

And to grow. In that knowledge. To reflect. That which rests. Within. So there is no contradiction. Based on. Who we are. Based on. What the bible says. About it. Church.

If God's saving power. In our lives. Depends upon. Mercy. Not by works. Then. We know. According to. Verse six. In the bible. In this passage. That his mercy.

Is poured out. Richly. Abundantly. Endless. Through the person. Of Jesus Christ. This is something. That doesn't run dry. Through the atoning work. Of Jesus Christ. On the cross. Verse seven.

Says. And declares. So that being justified. By his grace. Look with me. In verse seven. We are justified. By his grace. We might become. Heirs. According to the hope.

[36 : 59] Of eternal life. And to be justified. Is to become. Judicially. Vindicated. Literally. Meaning. Declaration. Of righteousness. Having compiled.

All the requirements. Of the law. However. It wasn't. By our own doing. The source. The agent. Of this justification. Is wrapped. In God's grace.

In verse seven. Which makes us. Heirs. A person. Who is entitled. To. By law. Or by the will. To be an heir. Is by law. Or by the will. To inherit.

The state of one another. This is what Jesus did. For each and every. Blood bought sinner. In the church. This is huge. And the basis of salvation.

According to the Bible. Is this. We are declared righteous. We are justified. By faith alone. When a sinner. As we all used to be.

[37 : 55] Turns completely. From their sin. And places their faith. In Jesus Christ. God releases them. From the penalty. Of their sins. As their sins. Were placed. Upon Jesus.

On the cross. All of our filthiness. Was transferred to Jesus. And man. Jesus. Suffered. Greatly. For that. This is known. As a substitution. And then looking at.

The last section. The church is great. Reward. We see in verse eight. The saying is trustworthy. And I want you to. Insist.

On these things. So that those. Who have believed. In God. May be careful. To devote themselves. To good works. He's talking to us church. He's talking to Titus.

He's talking to all the churches. Among all the generations. That have gone before us. I want you. To insist. On these things. So that those. Who have believed.

[38 : 52] In God. May be careful. To devote. Themselves. To good works. These things are excellent. And profitable. For people. And we see. The saying is trustworthy. This is actually.

A saying. It's used five times. In the pastoral epistles. And most. Often. When this. Appears. In the pastoral epistles. It's referring us.

Back. To the previous verses. Or no. It's. I'm sorry. I got that backwards. It's pointing us forward. The saying is trustworthy. So like. Heed these words. Coming up. But linguistically.

Speaking. In Greek. The following. The words. Following it. Many commentators agree. That it's actually. Pointing back. To those. Virtues. And vices. And the new birth.

And bringing emphasis. About that saying. Being trustworthy. And that by him saying. I want you to insist. On these things. All of these things. Previously. Because.

[39 : 48] Those who have believed in God. May be careful. To devote themselves. To good works. Works. And so we know. Number one. That if we have any good works. It has nothing to do.

With earning our salvation. But this is. An expression. Of salvation. This is us. Working out our salvation. So when we do. Good things. When we live our lives. In virtuous ways. Of gospel witness.

It has nothing to do. With earning our salvation. This has everything to do. With being a true gospel witness. For Jesus Christ. On this earth. And Paul insisted.

Upon Titus. To devote themselves. To good works. Because they are excellent. And profitable for people. Now. I mean. Like. We could like. Get some like. Holy rollers here. Like. Profitable. Now we're talking.

Man. Open your wallets. Let's. Let's start. Start making this profit happen. You know. So. You know. Maybe you'll see me living in a mansion. And I'll be like. Uh-huh.

[40 : 42] Like. Yeah. If Paul had it right in Titus. I like this verse. Look at all this room. Look at my cool pool. I even have a pool inside too. Yeah. We can have summer nights here. Anytime. In Cornersburg.

But this. These riches. In this life. Have nothing to do. With salvation. This is not saying the riches in this life.

Will reflect God's favor. In your life. But rather to devote yourselves to works. For the sake of storing our treasures in heaven. Regardless. If we're locked up. If the government.

Says. I don't want you to meet anymore. Oh. We're going to meet. According to scripture. And. You might have a senior pastor. Locked in the. Locked in the cage.

So be it. There's not much profit. In the Christian life. Other than what lies ahead. This earth is fleeting. It's empty. It's void.

[41 : 43] It's ridden by moths. It's stale. There's nothing that preserves. And nothing that lasts in this life. Life. This is not saying the riches of this life. Will reflect God's favor. In your life. Rather to store your treasures in heaven.

And this is also not saying. That we're to. Do things for earthly applause. Or for earthly fame. For people to like us. For your friends to say. On the college campus of YSU.

Or in high school. Like wow. They have a bible. Wow. You guys must have it all together. Actually. It's the latter. We have. We have. We're falling apart.

And we need. The word. We know who we once were. This is an anchor for our lives. We don't live. For earthly applause. We don't live. For earthly fame. But for the praise.

Of God. And the fame. Of Jesus Christ alone. Amen. There's no question. That this inheritance. Will be received.

[42 : 39] In this section. Of the church's great reward. That. This is the work. Of our triune God. We see the Trinity. Actually. In this. This chiasm. This. This. Literary sandwich.

We see the Father's work. In verse. Four through five. We see the Son's work. In verse six. We see the Holy Spirit's work. In verse five.

And church. This is a signed. Sealed. And done. Deal. And yeah. We're going to have trouble. In this life. I assure you of it. We're going to be tempted. But.

From every which way. The devil doesn't want us. To. To heed these words. Of virtuous Christian living. For the sake of gospel witness. He wants to thwart it. He's wanted to thwart it. Since the garden.

So I have an encouragement for you. For anybody. Who is. Newer. In their faith. In Jesus Christ. You have to know. That sin. Is messy.

[43 : 37] Sin is extremely messy. Sin. There is no other way around it. And. It's not your job. To convince family members. Or friends. That you are saved. It's not your job.

That was something. That Paul heeded. When he wrote. The letters to Galatia. When he said that. He could have ran straight. For Jerusalem.

And said. Peter. Look at me. I was throwing stones. At you before. But now I'm saved. No. He disappeared. He wasn't worried about. Changing people's opinions. He is worried about. Being obedient to God.

And allowing him to deal with. People's opinions. But sin is messy. It's. It's often. It often takes time. To convince others. Of your conversion. But allow the Lord. To prove your status. For anybody new.

Or in their faith. Sin is nasty. And nothing. It's nothing to be played with. It's nothing to be toyed with. But death. Is replaced with life. Church. Through Jesus Christ.

- [44 : 34] We are made new. In Jesus Christ. Salvation is not earned. Regeneration. Is not something. That you can work up. You were literally dead. Spiritually.
- Without a heartbeat. No pulse. Nothing. Anything good that we had. Was like the prophet Isaiah says. Like filthy rags. All of our good works.
- Are like filthy rags. In the sight of a holy God. But if you've been a Christian. For a while now. Isn't this the good news. That never loses flavor.
- If you've been a Christian. For any sort amount of time. Maybe you've been a Christian. For 50 plus years. This is the good news. That never loses flavor. But we know that sin deceives.
- We all agree. Sin deceives. It divides. It destroys. Detests. It desires. As we come to a close. I do have some. Challenges for you. Especially for the Christians.
- [45 : 34] Who are joined here today. You are called to. Rise above. Sin. To wage war. With your sin.
- And to die to your flesh. Daily. That meaning. What our. What our flesh. Are being. Being fallen. Being the human condition.
- That we still struggle with. We're not going to be in perfect unity with God. Until this life is past. But as we still grapple. With the sin. Men with lust.
- Women with lust. With desires of. Of jealousy. With. With greediness in this life. That often captivates. Our. Our minds. And our hearts. You're called to rise above sin.
- And wage war with it. To die to those desires. Are you living your life. Hypocritically. Proclaiming that God. Is actually a liar. In your life.
- [46 : 34] Or living progressively. Faithful. To proclaim that God. Is faithful. Does your witness. Contradict your message. Don't leave here today. Without dealing with your sin.
- And we're going to. We'll have some time to pray. Pray about this. As we close. In our last song. A Facebook friend actually. Posted this last. Actually a thought this morning.
- He says that if you. Don't crucify your flesh. Privately. Your flesh. Will crucify you. Publicly. I read that. I'm like. Holy Spirit.
- Thank you. You added just another line. For the sermon today. If you don't crucify. Your flesh. Privately. Your flesh. Will crucify you. Publicly. And if you are not in Christ.
- I actually want to speak. Very specifically to you. Today. On the live stream. Or in this room. You are not in Christ. You are called. To repent.
- [47 : 31] Of your sin. Not a. Pleasing message. You want to hear. On a bright sunny morning. But the Bible calls you. To repent. Of your sin. And to yield your life.
- To Jesus Christ. If you are not in Christ. I want you to consider. An excerpt. And I'll paraphrase. A little bit of it. From his book. Illustrations. Of Bible Truth.
- By H.A. Ironside. And Ironside. Died in 1951. He was a Canadian. American. Bible teacher. Theologian. He pastored. Moody Bible Church. For about 19 years.
- In Chicago. And his book included. The story of a new convert. Who gave his testimony. During a church service. As we have our closing. Reflections on this today.
- Listen. He said. With a smile on his face. And joy in his heart. This new convert. Related in this church service.
- [48 : 25] He delivered. How God delivered his life. From sin. He gave the Lord. All the glory. Saying nothing about. Any of his own merits.
- Or what he had done. To deserve the blessings. Of redemption. This excited new convert. At the pulpit. However. Here comes Eeyore. The person in charge.

Who was very legalistic. Didn't fully appreciate. The reality of salvation. By grace. Through faith alone. Apart from human works. So. He responded.

To the young man's comments. By saying. Quote. You seem to indicate. That God did everything. When he saved you. Didn't you do your part.

Before God did his. And the new Christian. Jumped to his feet. And said. Oh yes I did. For more than. 30 years.

[49 : 18] I ran from God. As fast as my sins. Could carry me. That was my part. Running from God. But God. Took after me.

And ran me down. That was his part. Commenting on this testimony. Ironside wrote. It was well put. And tells a story.

That every redeemed sinner. Truly understands. And I believe that. Everyone who is in Christ. And here can. Come with an amen. That God chased after us. If you're not in Christ.

This is true living. This is hope. That never runs dry. This is a message. That never loses its flavor. And guess what. You have an opportunity.

To be released from your sins. Today. I ask you to. Stop running. From Jesus. In your sins. Right now.

[50 : 18] God can save you. Within an instant. If you yield your life. To Jesus. So if you are. At that point. Where you want to give your life. To Christ.

Fully. You've been on the fringe. You know you haven't really been living. A Christian life. I want you to come forward. And pray with me. As the team. Will play.

And so we can respond. To this message. But come pray with me. Up here at the front. And there's no judgment. There's. There's all welcome. In the kingdom of God. Because we were all once there.

But just like those faithful words. Of game time. Church. I don't think there's any other way. That we can respond. To this message. Other than. It's game time. Let's get ready to rumble.

As a church. Let's heed these messages. Of who we used to be. And who God is making us to be. And revealing us to be. In this world. As distinguished from sin.

[51 : 14] Stop messing around. It is game time. Let's pray. Let's pray.