

Last week, we saw in the first 10 verses of Titus chapter 2, that you are to be who you are in Christ. You are to be who you are in Christ, whether older or younger, whether a man or a woman, whether as an employee or a teacher, in whatever stage and age you find yourself. There are commands that you are to obey in Christ. And all of these commands in those first 10 verses of Titus chapter 2 are building on the principles found in verses 11 through 15. In other words, those commands in the first 10 verses are not commands for you to obey to save yourself. Those are commands for you to obey because you have been saved, because this is who you are in Christ.

So with that in mind, let us pray and ask the Lord to bless us as we come to verses 11 through 15 of Titus chapter 2. Beloved Heavenly Father, we ask that you would pour out your spirit upon us. No eloquence, no passion, no power in man can raise the dead or sanctify. But you, O God, do it through the preaching of your word, by the power of your Holy Spirit. So do it now in our lives for your glory, in Jesus' name, amen. Titus chapter 2, verses 11 through 15.

Hear now the word of God. For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession, who are zealous for good works, declare these things, exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you. Amen. Sends the reading of God's holy word. May he bless now the proclamation of it to our lives.

Well, there are some things in life that you just never master past. You might think of marriage, for example. Whether you've been married for one year or you've been married for 50 years, you never master marriage. You're always learning, you're always growing. There might be many differences between a newlywed couple and a couple that's been married for many decades, but they have at least this much in common. None of them can claim that they have mastered marriage.

And so there are things in the Christian life that you also likewise never master. And grace is one of those things in the Christian life which you never master. Whether you've been a Christian for just a few years or whether you've been a Christian for many years, you never master grace. You can never say as a Christian, well, now I don't need grace anymore because I've been a Christian for a long, long time. No, you never get to graduate from the school of grace in the Christian life. The grace that saves you is the same grace that trains you throughout your life as a Christian.

And so as you come to Titus chapter 2 verses 11 through 15, you're exhorted to live a grace-filled life. Live a grace-filled life. And you are called to live a grace-filled life for four reasons. First, live a grace-filled life because grace appeared. Second, because grace trains. Third, because grace waits. And fourth, because grace redeems. Grace appeared, trains, waits, and redeems.

So first this morning, live a grace-filled life because grace appeared. You see this in verse 11, for the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people. And again, that word for at the start of verse 11 is really important because it's showing you that all that he said in the previous 10 verses is connected to the grace of God that has appeared. In other words, he's saying, do all these things in the first 10 verses. Young women, old women, young men, older men, and all these different areas and stages of life do all these things for the grace of God has appeared. This is the grounding for which you are to do all these sorts of things in your Christian life. So don't

overlook that word for, for the grace of God has appeared. It is this grace that is to motivate you to pursue holiness of life. But what is the grace of God?

We use the word, but let's slow down to define it. We can say that God's grace is his unmerited favor towards sinners. It's his unmerited favor towards sinners. In other words, this means that You can't claim that you deserve God's grace in and of yourself. You do not earn your salvation by your works. It's a gift granted to you by God himself. It's unmerited. It's not something you deserve.

It's been said condemnation comes by merit. Salvation comes by grace. Condemnation is earned by man. Salvation is given by God. So what is it that man can earn by all of his efforts and his works? There's this one thing that you get to earn, condemnation. And what is it that man gets to receive by God's grace? He receives salvation.

But if grace is this idea of unmerited favor towards sinners, how is it that the Apostle Paul, writing by divine inspiration here in verse 11, can speak of it as having appeared? In other words, how can an idea appear, manifest itself? And the reason he can speak of it as appearing is because grace is not only an idea, grace is a person. Grace appeared in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. You might think of John chapter one where it talked about how grace and truth have come in the coming of Christ Jesus. Grace upon grace in his being, in what he came to do for his people, grace was manifesting itself on planet Earth. And so, because grace is not just an idea, but actually a person, it can come bringing something. And what does this grace bring in verse 11?

Bringing salvation. And this, beloved, is what mankind desperately needs. This is what mankind needs more than anything else in the world. Mankind needs to be saved. Man does not need to be told that he is good. Man needs to be told that he is a sinner who needs a savior, and that Jesus Christ is the savior of sinners.

One time I was at an airport, and I was speaking with a very well-educated woman, probably in her 60s, and we were conversing, and she knew I was a Christian, and we were speaking about all the problems in the world today, and she asked me, in essence, if I could give her a reason as to why things were the way they were. And I said, well, because people aren't saved. And she said, saved?

She had no idea what I was talking about. She was a woman, probably in her 60s, well-educated, She was from London, she even had that accent, right? Think of a person with that accent, they're automatically at least slightly well-educated, right? Because of their accent. And she had that. And you know what she didn't know?

She had no concept of what it meant to be saved. And so I want to ask you here today, do you know what it means to be saved? Do you know what it means to have salvation? To know that what you deserve is the wrath and curse of God because of your rebellion against him. and that in Jesus Christ, there is salvation.

And that's what mankind needs more than anything else in the world. Whatever man might convince himself he needs, your air conditioning goes out and you're convinced your greatest need is air conditioning. Some other

inconvenience happens and you're convinced that's your greatest need. It's not. Your greatest need is Jesus and it's salvation, which only comes in Christ.

And this text is declaring to us that This has come, it's come in Jesus. And it's come for all people, the text says, bringing salvation for all people. Now the all people here clearly means all types of people. In the previous 10 verses, he's talked about all types of different ages and stages of people, male and female, old and young, and he's saying for all types of people, this gospel has come, this grace has appeared, bringing salvation. You know, there really is no haves and have-nots when it comes to our status as sinners, those who are born outside of Christ, who don't know Jesus Christ. We're all, no matter how rich you are, poor you are, whatever you have or don't have, really what you don't, what you really, this levels the playing field. Every man and woman is in the same boat, and that boat is called sinner. And so what this text is declaring to all types of people is that there is a Savior, you have a problem and Jesus is the solution. Know Christ. He's appeared.

Now, if you were to try to leave today and you didn't have any fuel in your gas tank, you wouldn't be able to get started, would you? And if you try to live the Christian life apart from the grace of God that has appeared in Jesus Christ, you cannot even get started.

This is the foundation for your holiness, for your pursuit of growth and grace. Now, one reason I want to suggest to you today that you might be inclined to not repent of your sins is because, functionally, you may not really believe that salvation is by grace. On paper, It may be the case that every person in this room would get this doctrine right. Salvation is by, fill in the blank, grace. But functionally, it is very easy to live the life of the Christian as if it's really by works.

And this prevents repentance. It prevents you from repenting. Why? Why does it prevent you? Because you think to yourself, if I go to God with who I really am, he's gonna cast me off. If I actually call my sin what it really is, he's going to reject me.

He'll want to have nothing to do with me. But that's workspace salvation. It's saying he's going to deal with me according to my sins. He's going to repay me according to my iniquities. And what he says is, no, I'm not. I save by grace and grace alone. Come to me.

When you really believe in grace the way it's described here, it should make you repent without hesitation and without qualification. So often in the Christian life, you go to your father, or you think to yourself anyways, when you try to repent, it's that person's fault really. Yes, I sinned, but it's really this thing that made me sin. No, no, no, no, no. When you really believe in grace, you can just own it. You can just take it on. You can just call it what it is.

Because you know what? Your heavenly father, he loves you. He saved you by his grace. He knows that it really wasn't because of what that person did or because of what that person did. It's because there's sin in my own heart. And so I can just own it because he's not going to reject me. And I can do it quickly, right, without hesitation so often. You sit in your sin for a while, maybe even a long time, because you're just trying to wait till you can really go. No, you sin, and then the moment you realize you've sinned and you know you've sinned, you just go straight to

Jesus. Why? Because he's not going to reject you, because it wasn't about your works. That's never why you're going to heaven anyways. So just own it. Just call it what it is, because Jesus loves you.

Because he sent, because God the Father sent his son to die for you, and so you can repent more boldly because of grace. Grace does not prevent repentance, it actually enhances our repentance. And so, live a grace-filled life because grace has appeared, but secondly, live a grace-filled life because grace trains, because grace trains.

This is in verse 12, look there, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age. The word training here is in the present tense. It's an ongoing action. And so the idea here is that you're always being trained in grace.

You might think of training in grace as something akin to going to school, only unlike school where you might go from K-12 or kindergarten through 12th grade, when you go to the School of Grace, you never graduate. There's never a ceremony of graduation when you go to the School of Grace. You just continue in this school from when you're born again, and then forever and ever and ever. From the day of your salvation unto eternity, you are never graduating from the school of God's grace. He's training you throughout your life.

That's why we talk about growing in grace, growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, 2 Peter chapter three. We're growing in it. Yes, we're saved by this grace, but we're trained by this grace. And so you can think of Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, By the grace of God, I am what I am.

And His grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder." So he's trained by this grace. I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is within me. You see, grace didn't make Paul a lazy Christian. It made him an active Christian, a hardworking man for Jesus. Grace trains us, you see in our text, both negatively and positively. It trains us to renounce negatively ungodliness and worldly passions. And this word renounce carries with it some weight. It's the word used in the Gospels when Jesus, when Peter denied Jesus, he renounced Jesus.

And so you are to deny or to renounce these particular things. ungodliness, and worldly passions. Now, what is ungodliness? Well, ungodliness is simply having no room in your thinking for God. You don't have any place, you don't have any time, he's not a priority, he doesn't have a place in your thinking, in your heart. Ungodliness, while it will often manifest itself in outward actions, may not always, at least readily, manifest itself in outward actions. In other words, a man or a woman can look pretty godly externally, but ungodliness is saying that in your heart you do not have room for God. That's ungodliness. There's just not time or place or space for him in your heart.

And ungodliness leads to worldly passions. Beloved, there's a theme throughout the entirety of the Bible that shows you this sort of pattern. Ungodliness, rejection of God, always leads eventually to wickedness among your brothers and sisters, wickedness among your fellow man. Ungodliness, then what does it lead to? Worldly passions.

So notice that it doesn't say worldly actions. It says, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions. You see, sin goes far deeper than just actions. Sin goes far deeper than just external deeds. It has to do with your very affections, your very passions, your very heart. And it says that this grace is to help you to renounce these sort of things.

Maybe there's someone here this morning and you find yourself committing certain sinful actions And they're far worse than anything you ever would have imagined you could do. When you were a child, or maybe even just a couple years ago, you thought, I'll never do X. And here you find yourself this morning, and nobody knows it, but you and God, that you're doing X. You've given yourself over to something in your deeds that is darker than you ever thought you would be able to do. And perhaps, just perhaps, one of the reasons you are there today is because you've only ever repented of sinful actions. You've only ever thought that sin went as deep as what you can see, and you failed to ever deal with the root, which is the affections of your heart. And so because you're not repenting of those affections, you're not really dealing with that root problem. And so the actions have gotten out of control. And so this text says, by the grace of God, repent of those worldly passions, those inclinations of your heart that you know are not right.

And that will lead to greater conformity and action to Jesus Christ. But also, it trains us positively to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives. Now, it's been observed that each of these characteristics here that go from self-control, upright, and godly, that these kind of deal with the self, and then fellow people, and then God. So self-control has to do with restraining yourself in a righteous way. Has to do with the self. And then upright has to do with living righteously before others. And then the last one, quite obviously, godly lives, means that your whole life is increasingly God-centered, godly. And so you can contrast the bookends of these commands are this. It started with renouncing ungodliness, and it ends with godly lives, godliness.

And so now, by God's grace, you are being trained, ultimately, to have thoughts of God. So before you had no room for God. Now you have an abundance of room for God. He is consuming your thought life. He's consuming your heart more and more by grace. You're slowly growing and maturing in God-centeredness.

But perhaps you're a Christian sitting here and you're thinking to yourself, well, I hear all this, but why is it so hard? I am a Christian. I am raised from the dead. God bought me with the blood of his son. I am being trained, but why is the training so difficult, and Paul knows that it is. In writing by divine inspiration, he tells you the reason it's so difficult is because the time in which you live. Look what he says there at the end of verse 12.

He says, in the present age, the present evil age is what he calls it in Galatians 1.4, you are living and being trained in the midst of the present evil age. And so because you're living in a world that hates God and there's sin all around you, not only is there the sin within you, we've already spoken of that, but there's also sin all around you, trying to destroy you, temptations of various kinds. You're living in this present evil age. And so it is hard to grow. The training is difficult. It is not easy. Training is challenging.

And so it might seem impossible for you here this morning to actually grow in grace, to be trained by God's grace. You think to yourself, I think my days of training are over, or my body is not what it used to be and so my circumstances are keeping me from growing. I would be growing if it weren't for my kids. I would be growing if it weren't for my fill in the tank, that thing in your life that might, you feel, keep you from being able to grow.

Well, consider those to whom Paul is exhorting to be trained in grace. He's exhorting people on the island of Crete, Christian people on the island of Crete. And you know what their circumstances were? They were not good. They lived in the present evil age just like you. All those around them were lazy, lying gluttons. That's what they're called in chapter one. The people around them were not helping them. In other words, they weren't living in a society where this was an easy command to strive after in their own lives. And so for you to be training in grace, to be growing in grace is gonna be challenging too because you live in a type of community like them. There's evil all around you. There's evil all over the place.

But the command still stands that you are to be trained by God's grace, you're to grow in holiness. So I wanna ask you this question then, do you believe here this morning that you can grow in holiness of life, that you can be trained by God's grace?

Because if you don't really believe that, you know who you're sinning against. You're sinning specifically against the Holy Spirit. You're saying to the Spirit of God, you can't grow me. And while you'll never reach perfection in this life, you can mature in this life. You can grow in grace in this life. And so if that's where your disposition is today, ask the Spirit of God to help your unbelief. If you don't believe that you can grow, ask him to help your unbelief.

But thirdly, you see, live a grace-filled life because grace waits. See this in verse 13, waiting for our blessed hope. And who is our blessed hope? Our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, the text says, verse 13. And so what you're being told here is that Jesus is God. He is our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity. And you're to be waiting for your great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Now if the text, praise the Lord, does not just say this, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God. If all it said was we were to wait for the appearing of the glory of our great God, that would be merely terrifying, wouldn't it? Because what it would be saying is you've got to wait for the glory of God to appear to you in all of his majesty. That would be a terrifying prospect. But it's wait for the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Because your great God, beloved, is also your great Savior, you can wait with joy. You're not just waiting for the greatness of God to come among you in the last day. You're waiting for the great God who is also your great Savior. So you can wait because of this Savior aspect. You can wait with great anticipation.

And let me remind you that this hope for which you are waiting is not just wishful thinking. Hope in the New Testament, I've said it before, is never just wishful thinking. Like you might say, I hope I have a good day at school tomorrow. I hope I have a good day at work tomorrow. That's wishful thinking. It may or may not happen.

Hope in the New Testament, beloved, is always a certainty of the future. And as I've quoted before from Edmund Clowney, hope is anchored in the past, Jesus rose. Hope remains in the present, Jesus lives. Hope is completed in the future, Jesus is coming again. Because of what Jesus did in the past, because of what he is doing in the present, and because of what he is going to do in the future, you can hope with certainty, with assurance. So fix your eyes

upon the sure return of your great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Wait with anticipation. This waiting should encourage holiness.

Perhaps this illustration could be helpful. Every one of us has had a time when you've had a big project or finals in school or some sort of mounting weight in your life. And what's helped you to get through that challenge is the light at the end of the tunnel. You've been able to say to yourself, I've got a couple more days, and then I'm going to be through this. Or I've got a couple more weeks, and then this project's going to be done. And that assurance of the termination, the end goal, gives you perseverance as you go through the trial, the difficulty, whatever it is, whether at work or school or some other place.

And so how much more so ought we to be motivated to be faithful as we wait for the return of Jesus Christ, our great God and Savior? He is coming, and so we can persevere in this life because there's this sure fact of his return. You wait actively, not passively. You apply yourself faithfully as he's called you wherever you are, as mothers, fathers, grandparents, wherever he's put you, you actively wait for his return.

And then fourthly, live a grace-filled life because grace redeems, grace redeems. You see this in verse 14, who gave himself for us to redeem us. The word redeem simply means deliverance by payment of price. Deliverance by payment of price. That's what it means to be redeemed. It means to be delivered by the payment of a price. And this deliverance, according to verse 14, is by God himself. Because it says, who gave himself, who is the who? Our great God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us. Deliverance, redemption, comes by God himself.

The Lord Jesus Christ gave him his whole self, himself, for your redemption. Jesus was more determined to give himself up for your redemption than you have ever been. to give yourself up for anything. There's never been a starving man who has wanted to give himself over to food as much as Jesus wanted to give himself up to pay for your redemption. Jesus gave himself, his whole soul, his whole body, he gave up for the salvation of his people.

This was voluntary. He wasn't tricked or duped. It was willing. He did it himself. This was an action that he wanted to take for the salvation of his people. This deliverance then is by God. This redemption is by God. But it's also redemption from something. If you're being delivered, you must be delivered from something. And yes, we can talk rightly so. And even this text alludes to it, to the wrath of God. And that's true. But what is being stressed in this particular portion of Scripture?

Deliverance is from sin, according to verse 14. What does it say there? who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness, deliverance by God from sin. You're delivered from all lawlessness as a Christian. This means not that you're perfect in this life, but what it means is not only are you delivered from the penalty of sin, the wrath and curse of God, you're also delivered from the power of sin as a Christian.

You know, there's a difference between reigning sin and surviving sin. As a Christian, there is no reigning sin in your life anymore. There isn't. It's been crushed at the cross. But there is surviving sin. You see, as a Christian, you don't live in known sin anymore with pleasure and peace. But sin still lives in you. And so there's sin within, but you are not living at peace with your sin anymore. You're waging war against it because you're but with the blood of Christ.

And so you're delivered from all lawlessness, from sin. And that happens in Christ. But then also there's deliverance, not only by God, from sin, but there's also deliverance to God. You're delivered to God. Look what the text says. It says, for, or to, it could be translated, to purify for himself a people for his own possession. So the result of God purchasing you, delivering you from sin, is so that you would be delivered to Him.

He wants you yourself. He wants to be, He owns you. He possesses you. You're his treasured possession now. The end goal of your redemption is union and communion with Christ. Union and communion with God. That's why he delivered you. Not just so that you would have an easier life, but so that you would have a relationship with him. He loves you. to have his people for himself.

This language, people for his own possession, comes right from the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 7, 6, for you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. So you are redeemed, beloved, by God, from sin to God.

All of that is captured, and even more, and verse 14. This all amounts to what we call substitutionary atonement. We all need at-one-ment with God. I can help you remember what atonement is, at-one-ment with God. We all need to be at one with God, united to God. We need our relationship restored. But the fact is, because of our sinful natures, we cannot restore that relationship. There is a gulf between sinful man and the holy God that is infinite.

And there is nothing that man can do to bridge the gap. The gulf is infinite. The only bridge that can be built must be built by one who can build an infinite bridge. And no man, even Wayne, who works in bridge building, can build an infinite bridge. You need God to build an infinite bridge.

God has built, my beloved, God has built a bridge between himself and sinful, rebellious mankind. And that bridge is the blood and righteousness of Christ. There is no way for man to build a bridge to Jesus, to God. You will not get to God through your efforts. But God has lovingly built this bridge, the Lord Christ Jesus, who is the savior of sinners. through what he has done on that cross brings a way to himself. Listen to this quote.

God the righteous judge so constituted reality that he can in history substitute himself in the person of his son to die in the place of sinners who have broken his law. What a wonderful reality is the gospel. Listen to this. that the judge himself submitted himself to be judged. The judge himself submitted himself to be judged. That is what it took for you to be reconciled to God.

You're a friend of God, and God can look at you and call you a friend of His because of what Christ has done in reconciling the relationship which was severed But since we have been redeemed by God, from sin, and to God, we've also been redeemed to be zealous for good works.

That's what the text says, zealous for good works. Paul went from being a zealous persecutor of the church, same word, and now he's zealous promoter of Christ. What happened to Paul? What was it that changed from being



zealous to persecute to zealous for good works? It was redeemed. He was redeemed. The blood of Christ was shed for him, and he was bought, and he was changed by the Spirit of God. And so you here this morning who are redeemed, who are bought with the blood of Christ, you are to be zealous. Zealous where? Zealous where? Where can I be zealous? What can I do? What can I do? Remember the first 10 verses. Be a godly mother. Be a faithful husband. Be a godly father. Be a godly whatever.

First 10 verses, be living, For God, where he placed you, as a student, as a worker, it doesn't matter. This is the context of these exhortations, and they must be obeyed. The final verse, verse 15, declare these things, exhort and rebuke with all authority, let no one disregard you. These are not optional commands. And accepting and believing the grace of God is also not optional. He says you are to be declaring these things, exhorting these things, and rebuking anyone who doesn't believe it. So if you're here today and you don't believe this, In the name of Jesus, I rebuke you to turn to Christ and take this seriously, because this is what the Bible is telling you to be doing.

And it's all out of His grace, His matchless, marvelous grace. So live a grace-filled life because grace appeared, because grace trains, because grace waits, and because grace redeems. Praise God, beloved, this morning, that grace does not only get you into heaven, but grace trains you until you get there.

Let us pray. Almighty God, we praise you and thank you for this grace, this marvelous grace, this grace which has come to us, not merely in ideas or philosophies. God, the world has philosophies. None of them are very good, but the world has them anyways. And we come having heard a word, not about a philosophy or an idea, but about a king and a savior. and a one who has done so much for us. And we praise you for him. We thank you for this grace, this grace of God and the person and work of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We pray that we would not tire of this grace, that none of us would leave here saying, I've heard about this grace before. I wish the sermon was about something more novel. Oh God, no matter the age, I pray that we would all leave this place knowing that we need this grace daily. We need to be trained and built up by the power of your spirit. We need to grow in our affection for Christ. We need to be ensuring in zealousness as husbands and fathers, as mothers and daughters, as sons, in all the spheres and areas of life to which you have called us. Help us, O Lord, by your grace. We pray all this in the name of Jesus. Amen.