

What Every Christian Needs to Know About Pastoral Ministry

Jon Benzinger

Titus 3: 8

May 24, 2020

Good evening, good morning, wherever you're watching, however you're watching, thank you so much for joining me for Redeemer Live. If you have a Bible near you, open to Titus chapter 3, that is Titus chapter 3, that is page 1,101 in those bibles that we give away, and how cool is that going to be, that soon we're going to actually be able to give them away physically as we reopen, or regather here in the next couple weeks. Titus chapter 3. And don't forget, as you're turning there, that if if you are able, if you want to, please take a picture and post it on social media with the hashtag RedeemerAZLive. Even though we're still going to be away from each other for a little bit longer, it is just great to see all of you, and kids, if you want to draw a picture of one of the illustrations that I give today, that would be great. Draw the illustration and then post it on social media, or have your parents do that, with the hashtag RedeemerAZLive.

Now don't do this if you're driving, but if you're watching in your home and you're able, please stand as I read God's word. Titus chapter 3, drop down to verse 4. Titus 3:4 says, "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. This 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," and as God's words you may be seated, and as you are, join me in prayer.

Father, this is a very important passage because Titus chapter 3 verse 8 gets at, reminds us again of the heart of the book of Titus, what is this book all about? And we see it in what Paul tells Titus to do in in chapter 3, verse 8. And so it's not just something that you wanted Paul to tell Titus to do a couple thousand years ago, it's something that you want us to understand, it's something that you want some of us to do and to do all the time. And so I pray that you would help us all to understand this text, and that you would help us all apply this text to our own lives, we need you to do that, so please help us to do that. And God, while I typically pray for other churches at this moment, God, you've been doing something online that has been truly remarkable. You have been you've been causing people to reach out to us from all over the valley, all over the country, and even from other parts in the world, and and people there are asking us to plant churches in those parts of the world. And so God, I don't know what you're doing with that, I have no idea, but I want to stay behind you, and I want to follow your lead if that's the direction you're going. So God, if it's your will, as I believe it is, for us to plant churches in the future, I pray that you would bring us exactly what we need, and I pray you'd bring us the people, I pray you'd bring us everything that we need, to to have men come here, to train those men and to send them out, whether it's to other parts of Arizona or other parts of the

world, we'd send them out from this place. God, what an incredible opportunity that you're laying at our feet, and I don't know if it's something that you want us to jump on or not, but I think it is. And so God, I pray that you would do the things that you need to do here in Arizona to accomplish your will for churches all over the world. And God, again, I don't know if that's what you want from us specifically, I believe that it is, the other elders believe that it is, but again, we're going to stay behind you and follow your leadership. But help us to do that, show us exactly what you want us to do, when you want us to do it, and God, move on the hearts of people where you want us to go. God, what an incredible blessing to be able to see you use this little church in Arizona to do exceedingly, abundantly, and beyond all that we could ever ask or think, do this please for the good of people here in Arizona, and maybe even in other parts of the world, and do it please for the glory of your name, amen.

Now last Sunday we we turned five years old as a church. May 17th is the birthday of Redeemer Bible Church and I forgot to mention it, and so I'm going to do it now. Five years ago we had come through eight months of pretty dramatic turmoil and on May 17th we had a fresh start. The new pastor as of a few weeks prior, new name, a new ministry strategy, which was turn the church around based on the Bible, stick to the Bible, do what the Bible tells churches, do what the Bible tells pastors to do. Be faithful to the Bible and let the chips fall where they may, whether the church would survive or whether the church would die. I would tell people back then, I don't know if God wants to use me to uh turn the church around or if He wants to use me to put it in the ground. I had no idea. I didn't want killed the church on my resume, but more than that I really didn't want trusting in myself or trusting in someone other than God to be how we turned the church around. I wanted it, I wanted to see this church that was on life support unmistakably turn around because of God. I also told people at that time, if this church turns around by doing only what the Bible tells us to do, then you know who can't take the credit? Me and the other elders. The only one who gets the credit if we turn this church around doing what the Bible says will be God and God alone. Well, if you'd have told me five years ago everything that God was doing in the last five years, in a million years I never would've believed you. In the words of Ephesians 3:20, which I just prayed, God has done exceedingly, he's done abundantly beyond all I asked or even thought to ask in those days. I am amazed and humbled that he decided not to let this little church die. He's turned it around in a truly dramatic way.

Titus 3:8, our text today is a challenge to 21st century pastors. It is a challenge because what it says about the Bible most pastors don't believe. It is a challenge because the ministry it describes, is not the ministry, it's not what ministry experts today tell pastors to pursue, and it's a challenge because this passage challenges pastors to challenge Christians to care deeply about something that most Christians really consider optional. So this passage is challenging us to say, are we going to do things the way the Bible tells us to do, or are we going to do ministry in some other way? Our text is going to give us three non-negotiables of pastoral ministry, that's three non-negotiables of pastoral ministry, and you might be wondering, why is he talking about pastoral ministry to hundreds of people who aren't pastors? Well, can you guess before I tell you? There are a lot of people running around out there calling themselves pastors, tons of them.

There are some 3 to 400,000 churches in America, which means there are probably over a million people in America using the title "Pastor," and expand that out to the whole world and there are tens of millions of people out there who are being referred to as "Pastor." Therefore, with tens of millions of people out there with that title you need to know, who are the faithful ones? Who are the ones you should listen to? Who are the ones that you should entrust with leading and feeding and protecting and caring for your eternal soul? How would you know? Is there any criteria? Well, there is. God has not left us to figure this out on our own, He hasn't left us to some superficial things like, is he cool? Is he entertaining? Is he interesting? One of the main concerns of this letter called Titus is what kind of pastors should be leading the church, and what are those leaders supposed to do?

So let's review this quickly. This is such a critical subject in our day that I spent seven messages at the end of chapter 1 explaining this topic in depth. We saw then that pastors are to be such men of character that other Christians should be able to follow their examples. What a huge, huge responsibility right there. We need God's grace for that alone as pastors. Then we saw that they should, pastors should trust and teach and defend the truth, as well as protect the church from false teachers. They shouldn't be shy about it, but chapter 1 verse 11, pastors should silence false teachers, they should rebuke them sharply, chapter 1 verse 13, or those false teachers and their teachings will spread like a virus. Then in chapter 2 pastoral ministry is on display in Paul's charge to Titus, in chapter 2 verse 1, to teach Christians to live lives that that match the sound and healthy life giving doctrine of the Bible. Paul told him in chapter 2 verse 7 that his life should be an example of good works to other Christians. He told him in chapter 2 verse 15 not to be shy about proclaiming the grace of God, or the life that God expects his people to live, he is to declare the truth, he is to rebuke those who refuse to live according to the truth, and he's to do so with all authority, so much so that nobody can disregard him.

Why all of this in the book of Titus, when most people reading this book, and most people listening to this message, aren't pastors, and are never going to be pastors, why this focus on pastoral ministry? Because the kind of pastor you hitch your life to, you better be able to see his ministry in the pages of the Bible. The Christians on the island of Crete, which is where Titus was around 63 AD when he received this letter, the Christians on that island would've read this letter too, and just doing that would allow them to look over Titus's shoulder, so to speak, as if he, and they're going to be able to see if he and the pastors there were doing what they were supposed to be doing. Listen, no pastor is above that a description given for what a pastor is supposed to be and what a pastor is supposed to do. We are all stewards, none of us are owners, we are stewards of the ministry, and we are stewards of the people that God has entrusted to our care. We have a job description that we will be held accountable to that clearly spells out what our senior pastor, what Jesus wants pastors to do and to be, and that job description is public so that you can check up on pastors, so that you can see how how he or how the team of pastors are doing at keeping their job description. If you struggle to match the description in the Bible of what a pastor's supposed to be and do with the pastors around you, it may be time to find a new pastor. At the very least it's time to start praying for that pastor, if not seeking to encourage that

pastor towards greater and greater faithfulness to these non-negotiables in the text that we're going to see today.

So let's see this as we jump into verse 8, where the verse begins, "The saying is trustworthy." Stop right there. The saying makes the makes a a close reader ask, what saying is Paul talking about? The saying is most likely what we spent the past five weeks looking at in chapter 3 verses 4 to 7, which is an explanation of the gospel, the good news of everything God does to save people. This teaching about God's kindness, His compassion, His mercy to sinners, the Spirit's work of regeneration, Jesus' work as Savior, justification, adoption, glorification, all received apart from good works, all that notice, is trustworthy, it is true, it is faithful to Jesus' message, it is faithful to the apostles that Jesus taught and sent, it is the message God wants connected with His name. These are words, in other words, that can be trusted, and they can be trusted, they are worthy of your trust because these words are true. They match reality, they fit the way the world is.

In other words, God really is kind and compassionate and merciful to sinners, there really isn't anybody who can earn their salvation with their good works. The Spirit actually does purify from sin and give new life, Jesus really is the Savior who is mighty to save and willing and able to save sinners. You really can hear case thrown out for lack of evidence on your judgment day, you really can be an adopted child of the God of the universe, you really can receive all that Jesus deserves. The idea here with this word is that this is not a delusion, this is not mistaken, this is not trivial, it's not an opinion you can take or leave or something temporary that will fade away. This is not my truth, but someone else's so-called truth is just as valid. This is certain. You can take your stand on it, you should stick to it above all else, no matter what, it is worthy of your trust because it is true. Now, how does Paul want Titus to respond to verses 4 to 7 being trustworthy? Look back at verse 8, "The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things." Because the gospel is true Paul is saying, I expect you, I command you to insist on these things. Notice this saying, notice this, "the saying" is singular, but "these things" is plural. Now now why does that matter? Because I think what what's happening here is this shift from singular to plural shows that Paul is expanding beyond verses 4 to 7 to include everything, at least from chapter 3 verse 1, if not going all the way back to chapter 2 verse 1, because chapter 2 verse 1 is where Paul starts explaining the kinds of lives that all Christians should live in response to God's grace, and and and that's where he's going to return in the rest of the verse, in verse 8 of chapter 3 verse 8. And all the ethical commands in chapter 2 and chapter 3 come in response to the kindness, to the grace of God who saves sinners through the gospel.

So with all that in mind, the first non-negotiable of a faithful pastoral ministry is this, faithful pastors will, point #1) ***Stress the Gospel, Stress the Gospel.*** They will be laser focused on the gospel, one note will be played from their pulpit, their music stand, or their round high top table and it will be the gospel. That note, the drumbeat, the consistent message will be the gospel. Notice, pastors are to, "Insist on it." This word means to speak confidently, to be uncompromising about, to give special emphasis to something. It is to be their consistent,

persistent affirmation, over and over again. Their greatest emphasis must and always be nothing other than the gospel, the good news that sinners can be saved by the grace of God alone through faith in Christ alone for the glory of God alone. This is a non-negotiable, and may be the non-negotiable of pastoral ministry, a heavy emphasis, a clear and constant stress on the gospel. In 1st Corinthians 15:3 the Bible says of the gospel, that it is, "Of first importance." Galatians 6:14, Paul says he refuses to boast about anything except, "In the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." All of the bests that life has to offer are at the very best second compared to the gospel. When others boast in themselves, their authority, their influence, their accomplishments, their religiosity, their seriousness of their obedience and sacrifice, pastors are to boast about, pastors are to stress the gospel. Instead of pushing 20 different tacks into the walls of people's lives, pastors should hammer away at the one nail of the gospel, pounding it firmly into people's souls. Pastors are to dwell there the longest, pressing it down hard on the people that God has entrusted to their care, and do it over and over and over again. Those people can be firm and knowledgeable in a lot of areas, and they should be, but they should not be firmer or know anything better than the gospel.

Listen, pastors, God does not want you to talk softly and carry a small stick. God wants you to thunder when you stress the gospel. Using CS Lewis's phrase, "We have pastors today without chest, without courage, without conviction, dominated by the opinions of others because they're not dominated by the trustworthy word of the Bible." They don't believe it's true, they don't believe its authority, they don't believe it's inherent, which is just another way to say that it's true, they don't believe in its efficiency to save and to grow people. For many the only thing that they insist on is that they will insist on nothing.

God doesn't want pastors who are afraid to take a stand, who avoid all controversy, who major in human opinions, who shy away from hard truths, who skim across the top of the Bible, who clamor for platforms, who crave applause, who are afraid to talk about sin and hell and wrath and the cross and substitution, and are afraid to call people to repentance. God wants pastors who will insist on these things, not shrink from these things. But won't people get sick of hearing the same thing? Yes, yes they will. Won't people get angry about hearing about their sin and God's wrath and their need for a Savior? Yeah, they will. Won't people leave? Yes, they will, let them, let them go. Those who know their need for a Savior will bless your name forever. Those who love the Savior will never get tired of hearing about His love for them when they were dead in their sins.

This text is a wakeup call to the 21st century pastor, insist, demand, be unwavering, uncompromising, immovable in your stress on the gospel. Be hesitant, be indecisive in many areas, but never be that way with the gospel. Be decisive, be forceful, stress it and stress it and stress it some more, keep stressing it until it is firm in you and until it has become sure and firm in the people's minds that you get to pastor. Whether everyone accepts it, or nobody accepts it, whether the culture praises you for it or wants to filet you for it, this is your charge, stress the gospel, teach it and preach it and persuade it and support it and encourage it. Be repetitive, be clear, be thorough in your stress on the gospel. Be bold, be confident, not in yourself but in the gospel, give your all, give your very best to making sure that people God's entrusted to your care

are rooted and grounded and firmly established in the gospel. Be done with the pep talks, be done with the pop psychology, the worldly philosophy, the humanistic advice, and the musings of sinful men. Pastor, the gospel should be the flavor of your ministry. Christian, the flavor of the ministry of your pastor should be the gospel. Demand nothing less, demand nothing less, and our text tells you why. Look at verse 8 again, "The saying is trustworthy, and they want you to insist on these things so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works."

Stressing the gospel will make Christians careful to devote themselves to good works, this is the reason, this is the desired result of stressing the gospel in pastoral ministry. Right theology and good works are inseparably bound together. When right theology doesn't do this, when there's a lot of theology without holy living, it's usually because of pride, there's been a flavor of pride that has extended out to people and knowledge has just puffed them up. But on the flip side, when pastors don't stress the gospel, it creates people who are a little different than the world. This has been the problem that Titus was sent to Crete to address, worldliness, being more and more like the world and less and less like the Savior of the world.

So when right theology, it must be married to good works. These are not at odds with each other, these are two sides of the same coin of what is called the Christian life. Verse 5, God does not save us because of our good works, however he insists that those who do believe, those who are Christians devote themselves to good works. Notice the text, verse 8, it talks about believers in God. That's not theists instead of atheists, this is those who are trusting in the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit that we saw last week and the past few weeks. They're trusting in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit to save them and those people, the text says, "are to be careful to devote themselves to good works." The word "careful" means more than just being concerned emotionally about something, like I'm full of care. It means to care about, yes, but it means, that care means to keep yourself occupied with something, to fix your attention on something so that you do it as a way of life. We would talk about an obsession, we can't get our minds off of something, that's what this word careful means.

Christians are to keep themselves occupied, notice, with devoting themselves to good works. Others cannot devote them to good works, they must think and plan how to be devoted to good works in their lives. Good works, what are good works? We saw the gospel, gospel is verses 4 to 7, the grace of God shown to sinners. The good works are the visible expressions of the invisible reality that is the effect of the gospel, that God is your Father, Jesus is your Savior, the Spirit is living inside of you, He's changed your life from being self-centered to being God-centered. This is mind, body and soul, thoughts, emotions, desires and actions, all for the glory of God under the Lordship of Christ for the good of our neighbors, and our neighbors, remember, is the people that we interact with all the time. In the end, the deeper the stress there is on the gospel from a pastor, the higher Christians will ascend in worship and in the holiness of their everyday lives, and that is what Paul wants for Titus, and that is what this text wants for pastors. Nothing more strongly encourages a holy life than a consistent stress on the gospel.

So for pastors, the second non-negotiable of their ministry is that they should, point #2) ***Prioritize Obedience. Prioritize Obedience.*** The word "devote" means just that, be active in good works, be busy with them, excel in them. The word is used of a store owner who's who's ready for anybody to come in their store, and they're ready to talk to them and sell them something. In the words of 2 Timothy 2:11, Christians are to "be ready for every good work." This reminds me of department stores, I worked at a department store when I was in my late teens, and while while people are walking on the path, you know, the broad the broad roads inside the department stores you know, nobody talks to them, but as soon as they step from the path onto the carpet you know, the salespersons start to engage.

Christians, that's how we're supposed to be, watching for opportunities to do good to the people that we're around on a regular basis. We must prioritize the doing of good works, not to earn or produce our salvation, but because salvation produces good works. "Let all the other cares of life," notice that word, we're to be careful, we're going to be full of care about good works, which means let all the other cares of life, food and clothes and job and spouse and kids and home and money and school, let all of that, let it all come under and be subservient to this one care, obedience to the will of the God of the Bible. There is nothing optional or secondary about good works, it is not an elective, it is a core course. It is not an appetizer, it is on the main dish. If the gospel is to be the constant drumbeat of pastoral ministry, then the expectation of obedience, the priority of obedience will be the tone, it will be the rhythm that is set by that ministry.

Good works, obedience has been Paul's goal for Titus, he wants Titus to go around to all the churches on the island and he wants him to raise up elders and he wants to encourage those elders to encourage those people to be obedient. They're to be people who do good. And this is true for every Christian, we are to be people who are constantly doing good. Ultimately good works give glory to God, Matthew 5:16. Good works show people how great God is because it's just, this is the life that God produces. Good works are the result of grace, they're what Christians were created to do. We're to be rich in good works, according to 1st Timothy 6:18, good works are to be an obvious aspect of our lives, so much so that good works become our reputation. Good works should be extended to family members and friends and strangers, other Christians and even those in need, and Christians should think about how to encourage other Christians to excel in doing good works. We're to be established in good works, zealous for them, devoted to them, equipped for them, so that we are increasing in them and models of them.

Now that's just a summary, pretty much, of every verse and the New Testament that says, "good works." Think about it, Paul didn't just stress the gospel in Titus, Hey Titus, just preach the gospel and Christians will kind of figure out this whole obedience thing eventually, they'll just figure it out, just keep telling them that Jesus died for them and they'll just figure it out eventually. No, he preached a grace motivated gospel produced obedience. He talked about the morality of a child of God in chapter 2 verses 1 to 10, and then grounded that morality in the gospel, chapter 2 verses 11-14. He did the same thing in chapter 3, morality in chapter 3 verses 1 and 2, gospel in chapter 3 verses 3 to 7. He bases, Paul, this is just a pattern of his, he bases all

the morality in Romans chapters 12-16, on the gospel Romans chapter 1-11, he does the same thing in Ephesians, the morality of Ephesians 4-6 is based on the gospel of Ephesians 1-3. Paul's paradigm is stressing the gospel and prioritizing obedience for Christians who are entrusted to his care. So listen, pastor, that should be your paradigm too. What do most pastors out there prioritize? Is it obedience? Is it taking the next step of obedience? Is it making people so enthusiastic about obedience that verse 8, they devote themselves to it, become obsessed with how and when and to who they can do something good for?

Or to flip it around a bit, are Christians more enthusiastic about good works after sitting under a pastor's ministry? Is there more evidence of good works after being exposed to a pastor's ministry? Are they better equipped to do these good works because of the pastor's ministry? Are there more examples of good works from the people who are connected to that pastor's ministry? Are there more and more endorsements of the gospel to non-Christians coming out of the lives of Christians connected to their ministry? Pastors should be asking this question to evaluate their ministries. If they don't hear people, hear about people growing, if they don't see life change, if they don't see people prioritizing obedience, if obedience is just optional, if it's secondary, if it's minor for the people entrusted to their care, that should cause those pastors to pause. And it shouldn't take long for people under a pastor's ministry to see, to touch, to taste and to smell whether or not obedience is a priority. Christian should never, ever think lightly about obedience, it should be their priority. Devoted to it, verse 8, ready for it, chapter 3 verse 1, zealous for it, chapter 2 verse 14 of Titus.

Many Christians today want to just flaunt their freedom in Christ, which means I can sin, I can live like the world, it doesn't really matter. This is antinomianism and if you watch Costi's sermon this past Thursday you heard a message that was a direct assault on this idea that we can live like like what God wants from us is optional. For many it's I kinda just don't do the bad stuff, everything else you know God really doesn't care about. No, we condemn Judas, but there are far too many Judas' still running around the church selling out Jesus for money, or for pleasure, or for power. Don't judge me, don't pester me with your moralistic preaching, tell me about God's grace and forgiveness. See, He doesn't even care. If you know someone who needs to hear about this, make sure that they go back and listen to Costi's message from this past week, make sure they listen to the series on 1st John because that is one of the main drum beats of the book of 1st John, that true Christians, those who've been born again, their lives are changed so they go from rebellious to obedient. That becomes the direction, the priority of their lives, is following the will of God for their lives.

Listen, freedom in Christ is not freedom to sin. Freedom in Christ is freedom from sin so that you can live the life that God wants you to live in obedience. Paul was, he's been making this crystal clear in the book of Titus, and he ends this instruction to Titus with why obedience should be the priority for every Christian, and therefore why it should be a non-negotiable for every faithful pastor's ministry. Look at verse eight, "The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things so that those who believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people." This final "these things" I think is

the same as the "these things" near the beginning of the verse. The Christian life described in Titus chapter 2 verse 1 all the way through Titus chapter 3 verse 8 is both, notice, "excellent and profitable for people." And what this is, what Paul does here at the end of verse 8 is he returns to the point of this entire letter to Titus. This series in Titus is called Godly Living For an Ungodly World, and I stress the word "for" when I first uh when I first introduced this series in Titus, because the Godly living, the good works that Christians are to do are not to be done in a vacuum, they're to be done in the real world. Verse 8, among "people," which refers to non-Christians, in contrast to verse 8, those who "believe in God." Our obedience, in other words, is for God, yes, and it's for our brothers and sisters, yes, but our obedience is also for non-Christians.

The word "excellent" means good, valuable, compared to gold, silver, and precious stones like diamonds. In other words, there is an attractiveness that is meant to draw people to Christ through our good works. That's because these works are also "profitable," which means helpful, beneficial, useful, giving an advantage to someone, affecting a person positively. Useful, our good works are useful, again, to draw people to Christ in repentance and faith. It's back to Matthew chapter 5 verse 16, putting God on display, showing how great and marvelous He is through the good works that He is producing through the lives of His children. This is 1st Peter 2:12, "Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable so that they may see your good deeds and give glory to God."

So the third and final non-negotiable of pastoral ministry from Titus 3:8 is that pastors are to encourage Christians to prioritize good works that, point #3) ***Bless Non-Christians, Bless Non-Christians***. Do good to them, be kind to them, be towards them the way that Jesus is towards you and you will show them how wonderful He is. This is Colossians 4:5, "Walk in wisdom towards outsiders making the best use of the time that you have with them." What would be the best use of your time with a non-Christian? Answer, showing them Christ in your words and showing them Christ in your works. This is what it means to, "Walk properly before outsiders." 1st Thessalonians 4:12, "Do what is good and right around them because they are watching." What 1st Timothy 3:7 says of elders should be true of all Christians, that we are, "Well thought of by outsiders." "Well thought of by outsiders." Let that sink in as you consider your social media posts over the past few weeks. Your good works, in other words, have an evangelistic force to them.

Let's see this in the letter of Titus itself, look at chapter 2 verse 5, Christian wives are to do good works, "So that the word of God may not be reviled." Non-Christians should never blaspheme God because of our lives. Titus 2:7, Titus is to be a "model of good works" that others can see and emulate. Titus 2:10, the good lives of Christian employees, "Adorn the gospel." We bring out the beauty of Jesus and his message of salvation, and we do that through our good works. All non-Christian interaction with Christians should cause them to think the very best about Jesus, about His people, and about His truth in His word. That is why chapter 2 verse 14, we're to be "zealous for good works," by 3:1 we're "to be ready for good works", and 3:8 and 3:14, devoting ourselves continually to good works for others.

The point of this letter is for Titus to create an atmosphere on the island of Crete where non-Christians are being impacted by the good lives of Christians. In many of our homes we're being watched by non-Christians, namely our kids and other family members. What is it that they're seeing? When things get more back to normal we'll we'll once again be surrounded by non-Christians that watch us every day. They'll see our character, they see if you're non-compliant and unsupportive and unfaithful, they know if they can trust you, they know if you're a vulgar, they know if you're humble, they know if you're a hypocrite, they know if they will ever darken the door of this church, not because of some some atheist on TV, but because they've watched your life. Like a magnet our lives will either repel people from Jesus or pull people towards him. Your job, your home, your school is your mission field, and your life will make or break the opinion people who know you will have of your Savior. Your life's always having a missionary impact on people, either for good or for ill. You commend Jesus to people with your life, or you condemn Him by your life. In the end the gospel will never lead to lazy, complacent, distracted lives of living like everyone else does, caring about and consumed with what everyone else is consumed with.

The gospel, the good news of God's mercy for sinners, the death and resurrection of Jesus, and everything else God does to save people, that is to be seen in those who believe, that gospel will produce people who are consumed with good works, with doing good, doing what's right, with honoring God and treating Jesus the way that Jesus treats us. Think about it. We have no excuse for this. We we always want to give ourselves an out, well you know, I'm a sinner, and because I'm a sinner I can never do, I can never really do good works, none of my works are actually good. Listen, if you're a Christian you were created, you were born again in Christ for good works. You have the spirit within you to encourage you to do good works. You have the mind of Christ to know those good works, you have the strength of Christ to carry those good works out, and you have faith in Christ, which Hebrews 11 says, "It is impossible to do anything that pleases God without that." And when you do those things, non-Christians, the people that we're tempted to look down on and despise, the people you know that that we used to be, when we do good works, God uses us, think about it. God uses us to bless non-Christians, to show them Christ and to save them.

As you beautify the gospel with the good works coming out of your life, that is verse 8, "excellent," that is "profitable," God uses that to attract non-Christians to Jesus and save them by using our lives. It's not a bad ministry for pastors to have. Pastors are player coaches on this too. We're not just to say this and equip the saints to do it, we're supposed to do this too, we have a high standard. It's not a bad ministry when you put it all together, stressing the gospel, prioritizing obedience, and God using our blessing of non-Christians to save those non-Christians, that's pretty great.

Now, before I close, let me remind you of a few things coming up this week. First, little commercial break, first eat at Gecko Grill if you are here in the Valley. Second the daily word this week, I'll be taking you through John chapter 2-7, so you don't want to miss that. And third, we have one more weekend online before we will be back to live streaming and meeting in person June 6th and 7th.

Now, those three non-negotiables for pastoral ministry, they correspond exactly to something that is very near and dear to Redeemer Bible Church. Think about it, why should we stress the gospel? Ultimately, in the words of John 17:3, we stress the gospel so that people will come to know Jesus in salvation. And, as we saw today, we stress the gospel so that people who are saved will grow in their love for Jesus as obedience is prioritized. Jesus did say, "If you love me, you will obey me," John 14 and 15, then these people who know and love Jesus will focus outside of themselves on others and serve them when they bless the non-Christians around them with their good works. Helping as many people as possible come to know, love, and serve Jesus is our mission statement, it is why Redeemer exists, and it is the non-negotiables from Titus chapter 3 verse 8 that the pastors of Redeemer are giving their all and their best to accomplish. I'm not saying because so that we get attention, we deserve no attention, all attention belongs to our senior pastor, Jesus Christ. These are non-negotiables for us though, because this is what the Bible tells us to do, and all of this is done so that the world will see just how great our Savior truly and really is. Let's pray.

Jesus, we, it is a strange prayer to pray, work in our heart so people see how wonderful you are. It seems almost like encouraging you to be prideful. But Jesus, you deserve the attention, you deserve the praise, you deserve everything. You deserve all glory and honor and power, and one day all creation will bow their knees to you and give you the attention and the praise and the fame that you deserve. Well Jesus, as your people we want to live lives that demonstrate we're doing that now, we're not waiting until the end, we're doing it now. And so Jesus, I pray that you would you would show us how you want these these truths to be applied in our lives specifically. Maybe it's how we treat our spouse, maybe it's how we do our jobs, maybe it's how we interact with people online, I don't know. But for everybody watching I know that you know, and maybe it's, a message like this is showing that wait a minute, there is something wonderful about Jesus, and and I need to give my life to him. Well Jesus, I pray that you would do that work that only you can do on those who are dead in their sins and need to be saved. Jesus, help us to be the people that this text wants us to be, help us to be the kinds of pastors that this text wants us to be, so the people will see not how great we are, we deserve nothing, so that people will see how great you are through the ministry that you produce and through the people that you produce through that ministry. Do these things please, I pray, not for us, not for us, but so that your name would receive the glory and honor and praise that it's due. Amen.