

**The Saving Grace of God  
(Grace Works)  
Titus 2:11-14**

*For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, <sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> 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.*

What would a self-portrait look like from your pre-Christian and post-Christian life. If you had to paint it with words, what nouns, verbs, adjectives would color your canvas?

Paul is going to supply some for us to help us round out the picture.

**First: The Saving Grace of God. 11**

*For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people*

a) What is Salvation in this Passage?

Salvation is a key word in our Christian doctrine. But it doesn't always mean the same thing.

- We are saved from the penalty of sin – past tense
- We are being saved from the power of sin – present tense
- We will be saved from the presence of sin – future tense

For instance -

1 - Temporary, physical deliverance

*Philippians 1:19 - for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance (soteria) = physical, temporal preservation*

2 - Eternal, spiritual deliverance

*Acts 16:31 – “Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved...” = ‘sozo’ = eternal, spiritual deliverance*

b) From what are we Saved?

Athanasius (296-373) was an Egyptian bishop who championed the full deity and humanity of Christ incarnate who first said, “*He became what we are that we might become what he is.*”

*But he also championed the 'ransom theory:' of atonement; that Christ liberated humanity from slavery to sin and Satan, and thus death, by giving his own life as a ransom sacrifice to Satan...*

(FYI: He was exiled five times by four Roman emperors, spending 17 of the 45 years he served as bishop of Alexandria in exile.)

But the Scripture clearly teaches that in that spiritual, eternal deliverance, we are saved from God's wrath in judgment

*Romans 5:9 - Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God.*

*1 Thessalonians 5:9 - For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,*

This is what makes salvation all-the-more incredible. From before time, God knew that he would create everything, that humanity would fall and that the only remedy would be the death of Jesus.

And so, in eternity past, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, determined that:

- 1 – The Father created
- 2 – The Son saves
- 3 – The Holy Spirit keeps

And they did this, knowing the cost beforehand.

British evangelist Steve Chalke referred to 'penal substitution' as 'cosmic child abuse' in his book, *The Lost Message of Jesus*.

But according to Jesus –

*John 10:17-18 - ...I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again.*

c) What Saves Us?

*Romans 5:10 - we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*

*Ephesians 1:7 - In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,*

This 'salvation' is one of the most important and complex words in the NT.

## Second: The Present Aspects of Salvation. 12 & 14

*training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age,*

Grace works and it works now.

*training = 'paideuo' = to train children, to be instructed...*

Saving grace is training grace

- a) Ungodliness = any attitude or action unlike Jesus
- b) Worldly passions = any attitude or action contrary to God's will

*Passions = 'epithumia' = unrestrained desire*

IMP: The problem is not desire. The problem is the direction of our desires – heavenward or earthward

ILL – Teana and I watched the movie, 'Angela's Ashes' this week which was based in Limerick, Ireland, before WWII and in which rain is a major character, overflowing the banks of the Shannon River and flooding even the first floor of their home throughout the whole of winter. Irish author C.S. Lewis also endured Belfast's rain and wrote

*"It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."*  
-C.S. Lewis

Here, Paul contrasts

- Ungodliness and worldly passions = mud puddles
- Self-controlled, upright, godly lives = a holiday by the sea

The GR is actually, "sensibly, righteously and godly."

- We love ungodliness and worldliness because we lack sense about godliness and heavenliness
- Upright = upward looking

*Ecclesiastes 7:29 - God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes.*

'upright' = 'straightness,' a synonym for honesty or integrity

That brings us to verse 14 -

*14 - 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.*

‘redeem’ = to loose, to liberate, to release on payment of ransom

‘lawlessness’ = wickedness, outside the law

‘purify’ = ‘*katharizo*’ = to cleanse, to cure

You easily get the picture. Sin is putrefying like leprosy. Salvation cures it from the inside out.

‘zealous’ = ‘*zelotes*’ = burning with passion

### **Third: The Ultimate Reason. 13**

Why has God done all of this? Why are we doing this? Where does it all end?

*waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,*

You can see the kind of 180° change that is indicated here.

And you can also see that ‘salvation’ has both eternal and temporal sides to it. In this way, we Christians model the city where we are going to live.

ILL – A person moving to a foreign country will research its language, culture, traditions, dress, foods, to best prepare for living there. In all these words, Paul is giving us a picture of what heaven looks like and how we should now live as we wait “for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ...”

If you met a person who claimed to be moving to another country but only hours before departure, hadn’t even packed, you’d have reason to doubt their sincerity about moving. You might say, “You really aren’t going are you?”

**2 Corinthians 10:5-6 - We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, <sup>6</sup> being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.**

‘Punish’ = vindicate or avenge – “Get revenge on the devil...your unsaved life.

What does that look like for you?

## Conclusion:

Grace works. That's not a contradiction.

**T - Titus 3:4-7** - *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup> 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, <sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

Works don't save us, but our salvation works and if it doesn't, it isn't Christian salvation. If we are not being changed, we are not saved from anything.

If you want more of a commentary on this, look at 2:1-10 for examples of what we are saved from. The word "for" in vs 11, links 11-14 with 2:1-10.

If you exchanged colors for words, what words would be on your color palate? What words would draw the change that has occurred in you since repenting of your sin and trusting Christ?

## Community Groups:

- 1 – How can we pray for you?
- 2 – Read the text?
- 3 – Talk about the two kinds of salvation: eternal and temporal.
- 4 – Discuss the three tenses of salvation.
- 5 – How are grace and salvation discussed in this passage?
- 6 – From what are we saved?
- 7 – How does this make grace and salvation all-the-more marvelous?
- 8 – What's wrong with the 'ransom theory'?
- 9 – What words of Jesus deny the 'cosmic child abuse' charge levied against the Father?
- 10 – What saves us? (Ro 5:10; Eph 1:7)
- 11 – List the present aspects of salvation in Titus 2:1-14.
- 12 – How did these sinful desires demonstrate themselves in your pre-Christian life?
- 13 – What does Lewis mean when he says our desires are "too weak?"
- 14 – According to verse 14, what does redemption mean?
- 15 – According to that verse, what does redemption do?
- 16 – How is 'zealousness for good works' demonstrated in your life?
- 16 – What does it mean to 'get revenge' on your nonChristian life?
- 18 – What words/colors used to paint the picture of your life?
- 19 – What words/colors now paint a picture of your life?
- 20 – What words/colors of your life should we pray for you about?