

Marvelous Mercy and Grace

Titus 3: 3-7

Our text this morning comes from the last of the books known as the Pastoral Epistles. Paul wrote three epistles to young preachers, two to Timothy and one to Titus. Much of the instruction is similar in these, but it is also particular to the situations these young men of God faced. Titus was called to pastor in Crete, a difficult city to establish and maintain a church. The people of Crete were notorious as a drunken, untrustworthy, lying, gluttonous people. This was the environment Titus was called to minister in.

The focus of this letter to Titus revolves around three primary issues: **1.** A Warning against False Teachers. **2.** A Charge to set in order the organization of the Church and the behavior of the Believers. **3.** An Exhortation to Titus to continue to proclaim the Gospel.

When one studies the life and ministry of the apostle Paul it is quickly evident that he never got over his Damascus road experience. He never forgot or became cynical about his conversion. Paul continued to be amazed at the grace and mercy of God. (I pray that we never get over our conversion. May we always keep that wonder and amazement!) As Paul exhorts Titus to preach the gospel, he offers a stirring reminder of what the Lord has done for those who believe upon Him. I want to consider the [eternal truths](#) that are revealed in our text verses as we think on: [Marvelous Mercy and Grace](#). First we must recognize:

I. Our Sinful Depravity (3) – [For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.](#) There are a couple of things I need to point out regarding our sinful depravity.

A. Our Condition – Paul declares, [for we ourselves](#)...He is including himself along with Titus in that category. Paul is well aware that he too was one bound by sin, having a depraved heart at enmity with God. Many today have a hard time with that realization, but it is true nonetheless. We were all sinful and depraved. None, in and of themselves, have a desire for the Lord or to live according to His righteousness. We were all sinful and condemned before God. The sad reality is many never come to that realization or choose not to admit it!

B. Our Character – In this verse Paul mentions several characteristics that the depraved man possesses and portrays. Now, we may not have been guilty of all of these, but I am confident that some of these character traits describe our lives before Christ. Consider we were:

1. Foolish – *Lacking understanding; unintelligible; total ignorance of God.*

2. Disobedient – *Impersuasive; not compliant; disobedient; rebellion against instruction.*

3. Deceived – *Purposely being led astray; seduced away from God and truth.*

4. Serving Divers Lusts and Pleasures – This includes all manner of lusts and pleasures. Lusts – *passionate cravings, desire, or urges for that which is forbidden.* Pleasures – *sinful satisfactions.*

5. Living in Malice and Envy – Malice – *evil, of vicious character; one who seeks the worst in others and desires to ruin by word or violence.* Envy – *a lack of satisfaction with a continual desire for more.*

6. Hateful – *Detestable; to be hated of another.* This is the only time this word is used in Scripture.

7. Hating one another – the depraved man is filled with envy and hatred for others. He has no compassion or love.

➤ We may not want to admit it, but that is a description of our lives before Christ. I'm glad that we didn't have to remain in that sinful state. Now let's consider:

I. Our Sinful Depravity (3)

II. Our Merciful Delivery (4-6) – God in His mercy provided a means for our deliverance through the sacrifice of His Son. This passage reveals much about our deliverance. Notice:

A. The Revelation (4) – *But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared*, Isn't that amazing when we think about it? After all of the sin and rebellion that God had experienced in the hearts of men, He revealed His kindness and love toward us in the giving of His Son. Man had spurned the grace of God; they had forsaken Him to serve idols; they had rejected His desire for fellowship, living only to please and satisfy the flesh, and yet God loved us enough to send His Son as a ransom for our sin. He knew that this would come to pass. This was always God's plan of redemption. In Christ Jesus we discover the love, grace, and mercy of God displayed for all the world to see!

- After hundreds of years of disobedience, rebellion, and rejection, God sent His Son as the Redeemer of men's souls. Even today, men continue to deny and reject the Lord and yet He lovingly reveals Himself to them, offering salvation!

B. The Righteousness (5a) – [Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.](#) Here Paul reveals the righteousness involved in our salvation. It is certainly not by the works of righteousness that we possess. Our righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God. We are not saved because of our efforts or our goodness; we are saved according to His mercy. God chose to save us. He chose to withhold what we deserve and offer mercy instead. I rejoice today that judgment was withheld and mercy was extended.

- All who come to Christ in salvation come according to His wondrous mercy and grace. It is not of our works or deeds. You could never live good enough to earn or deserve salvation. None are worthy of His salvation, but I praise Him that He made provision for our need.

C. The Regeneration (5b) – [by the washing of regeneration.](#) That is an interesting thought, the washing of regeneration. Washing reveals what you would expect, literally "*bathing or cleansing, a complete immersion.*" The word [regeneration](#) means "*to be regenerated or given new life; given a new birth; renewed or revived; spiritually reborn or converted.*"

- Don't you love that? In and of ourselves we were filthy and condemned before God, soiled in the rags of sin. By the giving of His Son through His marvelous grace we were washed and made clean in Him. The old man of sin was cleansed, leaving only the righteousness of God. We went down a sinner and came up a child of God. We were born sinful of flesh and experienced the new birth by the washing of the Lord! [Jn.1:12-13 – But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: \[13\] Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 1 Cor.6:11 – And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. 1 Pet.1:23 – Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.](#)

D. The Renewal (5c-6) – [Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; \[6\] Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;](#) We must keep in mind that all of this is possible because of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

- After our regeneration comes our renewal. This too presents an exciting and wonderful blessing. The old man has been regenerated a new creature in Christ and we are renewed in the Holy Ghost. **Renewing** has the idea of “*making new again; to renew or revive; to make new spiritually.*” The Holy Spirit does a complete renewal in the heart and life of a new born believer. Our lives are different than before; our “want to” has changed; we no longer desire the things we did before. Our focus has been transformed from the desire to please the flesh to a desire to serve the Lord and live for Him. Those who are born again experience a renewal of the Spirit. We ought to rejoice for the change that God has made in our lives!

2 Cor.4:16 – For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. Eph.4:22-23 – That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; [23] And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

I. Our Sinful Depravity (3)

II. Our Merciful Delivery (4-6)

III. Our Eternal Destiny (7) – I am glad that our hope in the Lord isn’t reserved for this life only. In Him we have an eternal hope and assurance. Let’s consider what eternity holds for those who have received the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Ghost.

A. Our Acceptance (7) – That being **justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.** Those who are regenerated in Christ are **justified** by His grace. That refers to “*declaring or pronouncing one to be just or righteous.*” We who were sinful and defiled before God have been declared righteous through the new birth. The righteousness that our blessed Lord possesses has been applied to our account. We are no longer viewed as condemned and separated from God in sin, but are received of Him, viewed as righteous as the Son is righteous.

Rom.5:1 – Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: Philip.3:9 – And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

B. Our Inheritance (7) – **we should be made heirs.** Those who are born again are no longer foreign to the Lord. We are no longer strangers; we have been adopted into the family and promised an eternal inheritance; we are heirs of God and joint-heirs of Christ.

Rom.8:16-17 – The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: [17] And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. 1 Pet.1:3-4 – Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, [4] To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Consider the thoughts of John MacArthur on the subject of joint-heirs. “*In the arithmetic of earth, if each heir receives an equal share of an inheritance, each gets only a certain fraction of the whole amount. But heaven is not under such limits, and every adopted child of God will receive the full inheritance with the Son. Everything that **Christ** receives by divine right, we will receive by divine grace.*”¹ Isn't that a blessing? We who are undeserving are promised an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away!

C. Our Existence (7) – we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is the point of our regeneration that is so profound. The Lord has not made a temporary change in us; when we are born again in Christ we are promised and assured eternal life with Him. When we make the transition from this life to the glories of His presence, we will be there for all eternity. The saved will live forever according to the saving power of Christ the Lord by His abundant mercy and grace. Titus 1:2 – In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

What truth we have considered in this passage this morning. It is a proper description of all who have ever lived. The deciding factor is whether you have been regenerated in Christ, born again and forgiven of sin, or if you remain in that depraved, sinful state. Jesus is man's only hope of redemption. Through Him there is cleansing and eternal life. Apart from Him there is judgment and condemnation. Which will it be for you? Have you trusted Christ as your Savior and Lord? If not I urge you to come to Him while He is calling.

¹ MacArthur New Testament Commentary, The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 1-8.