

Pure Church: Pure Motives

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 12 May 2013

Preacher: Jonny Grant

[0 : 00] of the Red Church Bibles. Titus chapter 2, beginning at verse 1. You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine.

Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to too much wine, but to teach what is good.

Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind and to be subject to their husbands so that no one will malign the word of God.

Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything, set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching, show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned.

So that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us. Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive.

[1 : 18] For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness, and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you. Thanks, Chris.

There's some notes and pens there. Maybe, Elena, you could do the notes. Thank you. Just as they're being passed out, not them, they're not going to pass out.

They're going to pass pens and paper out. Thank you. This morning's talk is really part two.

Last week we were looking at pure relationships, from verses 1 to 10, and this is really part two, our motive to live out those pure relationships.

[2 : 56] So, if you haven't been able to listen to last week's, or indeed any of the other weeks, they're all online at the church website.

You can listen in to them there. And again, if there are any questions that people want to follow up with afterwards, then very happy to talk with you.

Indeed, that's part of what we do on Wednesday evenings as we gather together, is to follow up on what we've been looking at and discuss it and apply it to our lives.

Well, we're going to be focusing in on chapter 2, verses 11 to 15 this morning, and we're going to ask for God's help now as we do that together.

Amen. Father, we want to live lives that will make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive.

[4 : 05] We want our individual lives and our relationships one to another to be so different that people see in us the life of Christ and the purity of Christ, and that people would be drawn to you, our great God and Saviour.

Father, we need your help to do that. We need your Holy Spirit to be at work. And we pray that right now as we listen and as we read and study together, that the power of your Spirit would be at work in forming our minds so that we understand, but also that it would travel the distance to the heart, inspiring us and motivating us to live as the people you call us to be.

We ask for your help in that, in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, school reports.

Some of you will be getting school reports very soon. And from what I can remember of mine, they were littered with comments like this.

Jonathan, that's my real name by the way, has had a good term but must try harder. Jonathan must do better if he is going to make progress next term.

[5 : 52] Jonathan has great potential, but greater effort is required. Your reports anything like that?

It was a sincere attempt to motivate me to work harder to get better results. Needless to say, it never did work. I never did get better.

In fact, it often felt that the more I tried, the more I failed. Now, Titus, as we have been looking at over the last number of weeks, is all about being and becoming a pure church.

Chapter 2, verses 1 to 10, shows us in detail the standard of what it is, what is expected to have pure relationships within the church family.

This is the standard that's expected. So, in verse 2, older men, well, we are to be temperate, worthy of respect and self-controlled.

[6 : 56] Older women, verse 3, well, are to be reverent in the way that they live and not addicted to much wine. Younger women, verse 5, are to love their children and husbands, to be pure, to be kind.

And younger men, verse 6, are to be self-controlled. Now, the motivation we often receive for this kind of living is often like our old school report.

You must try harder. You must do better. Greater effort is required. You must stop behaving like this and you must start behaving like this.

The only problem with that kind of motive is, as we all know from experience, the harder we try, the more it is we seem to fail.

And the more we fail, the harder we try. And it just becomes this destructive cycle of guilt and shame and our lives and our relationships lie in ruins before us.

[8 : 13] Sadly, that's how many people try to live their lives. Their motto is simply this, I must try harder. I must try harder.

Well, that kind of motive is an impure motive. It will never get us anywhere. What we need instead is a pure motive.

A motive that will and can make us into the kind of people that God calls us to be. We need to be a people who are motivated by grace.

So, look at chapter 2, verse 11. This is the connecting verse between 1 to 10 and 11 to 15. For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

Do you see how we're not given a school report? to make us more pure? He doesn't go on from verse 10 to say, now, older men, I'm very disappointed in you.

[9 : 26] You really must do better. Older women, you still haven't sorted out your drinking and your gossiping. You have to try harder. Young women, you're still the same.

Your home life is a mess. A lot more effort is required from all of you. Younger men, you've let the side down again. You really have to do better. But just even the very thought of that kind of motive is just crushing.

It breaks us and it destroys us. So, instead of throwing us at a school report and this school master standing over us with a big stick to tell us do better, he directs us away from that to a new master.

A master called grace. And he's telling us that we can live in pure relationship with one another because, verse 11, because the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

This grace of God is available to all people. That's what the meaning there is to all men, not just men, all kinds of people.

[10 : 50] It's available to the older men and to the older women. It's available to the younger men and the younger women. There's no discrimination. God's grace flows freely to the desperate and broken people like us.

and that's why we set out this morning that we come with open hands in our weakness to say, God, fill us with your grace. You see, what is impossible to do by trying harder now becomes possible by God's grace because God's grace motivates us to live pure lives so that, look at the end of verse 10, so that in every way, we will make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive.

The only way that Christ will be seen through our lives is when the grace of God is deeply at work in our lives.

So, we're going to look at three things, three ways in which grace motivates us in our lives. This is our motivation. First, we will be motivated by past grace.

Verse 11. For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all people. This grace of God has, he says, already appeared.

[12:24] We're not waiting for it. If we are Christians, we have already experienced God's grace in our lives. So, what is that grace? What have we experienced?

Well, look down at verse 14. Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. Jesus Christ gave his life for us. He died on the cross in our place for us. but not only just for us, for this double purpose.

There's two reasons and we see it in verse 14. He died for us first to redeem us from all wickedness and second to purify for himself a people that are his very own.

God's grace has taken us out and has rescued us from an impure wicked life and he has brought us in and he has given us to a pure life.

[13:38] We are set free from a life of sinful and broken and damaging relationships to be able to live a life of new and pure relationships because God's grace never comes in half measures.

It comes to us in all its fullness redeeming us and purifying us. God's grace has this double effect on our lives.

It liberates us from one kind of life a life of slavery to sin under a cruel oppressor Satan himself but more than that he doesn't just liberate us and free us he now cleans us he purifies us for a new kind of life a life of purity where we now belong to a kind and gracious master Jesus Christ.

That means because of past grace we now have a brand new identity. Once we were not God's people once we could not live as he called us to live but now because we are God's people we are his very own his treasured possession who look at the end of verse 14 who are his very own who are eager to do what is good.

Our new identity our new life our new position because of past grace means we can now begin to live the new life that God intends. We are eager to do what is good.

[15:17] So let God's past grace inform our minds let it shape our hearts so that we are motivated to live a life of purity.

So that's the first step. Be motivated by past grace. Second be motivated by present grace. Let's read verse 11 and 12.

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all kinds of people. It teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions and to say yes to live self-controlled upright and godly lives in this present age.

So grace is not just a past experience it is also a present reality. His grace goes on working in our lives every day teaching us how to live.

And there's two things from verse 12. First grace teaches us to say no. Let's read verse 12 the beginning again. It teaches us to say no to ungodliness and worldly passions.

[16:38] Well how does it teach us to say no? Well as we look to grace God's grace reminds us of what we once were.

The cruel oppressor that we once had. By God's grace we have been taken out and we have been rescued from this old life a life where we could actually never say no.

We could only say yes to ungodliness but now we've been given a new life where we can now say no to it. So why would we ever want to step back into that old life again?

It's like those three women, I'm sure you've seen it on the news, who were just rescued from ten years of brutal captivity. Locked up chained.

It would be unthinkable for any one of them to want to go back to a life of absolute misery, to go back to their old master.

[17:53] In the words of one of the ladies Amanda Berry as she came out her words were I'm free now. Why would you ever want to step back into the old life?

Why would we ever want to go back having been set free from an old life? It's unthinkable. You see, the more we understand and appreciate this grace, the more that we drink God's grace into our lives, the more it teaches us to say no to all kinds of ungodly behaviour.

Why would we want to go back there? So first it teaches us to say no. Second, grace also teaches us to say yes.

Look at the rest of verse 12. No to ungodliness and yes to live self-controlled upright and godly lives in this present age.

Again, grace is there to remind us of who we are now. That we now belong to God. That we have now been given a new life of purity.

[19 : 09] We are now treated as God's son, as if we are pure. By God's grace he has brought us into a new life. He has given us into a new life so now we can say yes.

So why would we not want to live in this new wonderful life that we have been given? Again, to illustrate as we have watched all those news reports and listened to those ladies as they have given their story, the scenes that we saw on the television as they came to their family embracing their loved ones that they hadn't seen for years.

The sense of going home, the security and the peace, knowing that they will never have to go back to that old house again, no longer living in those filthy, dirty, rotten conditions.

It would be unthinkable for any one of those ladies to leave their home and family to go in search of something better. So why would we ever want to live, leave this new life, this new purity that Christ has given us?

It's unthinkable. Why would we want to do it? You see, the more we understand and appreciate this grace of being set free and given a new purity, a new kind of life, the more that we grasp it, the more we read of it, the more we think about it and discuss it, the more we take it into our lives, the more it will teach us to say yes to all kinds of godly behaviour.

[20 : 57] And living rightly with one another. This means that transformation, this ongoing change in our lives is a daily reality by God's grace.

Grace is there as a kind master teaching us because we're still learning to say no and yes. Sometimes we say yes when we oughtn't to and sometimes we say no when we oughtn't to change.

Because we're not there yet. There is a progression in our life. But we still see evidence of change. And God in his goodness is working that out in us day by day by his grace.

We started with a song this morning, Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound. John Newton, the author of that, grasped what it was to have grace at work in his life.

Here's a quote. Maybe somebody could write another verse to the song from this quote. This is what he says, I am not what I ought to be. I am not what I want to be.

[22 : 11] I am not what I hope to be in another world. But still, I am not what I once used to be. And by the grace of God, I am what I am.

Okay, we're not there yet, but we're not what we used to be. God, by his grace, is at work in our lives, teaching us to say no and teaching us to say yes.

So let God's present grace, may it be a reality in your life, just as much as you eat food and drink every single day to keep alive.

Drink in and eat in the wonderful grace of God. Let it inform your mind, let it shape our hearts, so that we are motivated to live a life of purity.

So past grace, present grace, guess, future grace, grace.

[23 : 19] Verse 13. We say no and yes, verse 13, while we wait for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

As we look back to past grace, as we live in present grace, so we're also waiting for future grace.

On that day we are told there's going to be a glorious appearing of the risen Christ.

Just as Jesus came once, so Jesus is going to come again. And look how this appearing is described in verse 13.

we wait for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing. What is this blessed hope?

What is the glorious appearing? Why is it so glorious when Jesus Christ comes again? Well, we're kind of given a hint of that in chapter 3 verse 7. so that having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

[24 : 43] When Christ comes again, we will enter into that eternal life. And that is true. But there is something bigger and something more glorious than just thinking I'm going to live forever.

It's much more than that. When Christ comes again, he will take his people to be with him forever.

And what it will mean is this, it will mean a life of absolute purity.

A life where his people will be free from the struggle of sin forever. A life where we never ever have to confess sin or ever have to ask for forgiveness again.

A life where we're never going to experience guilt and shame. A life where we never give in to temptation. A life where our relationships with one another are absolutely pure.

A life where older men and women and younger men and women become pure like Christ. In fact, what we can say with absolute certainty is that when Christ comes again when we see Christ, we are going to be like him, without sin, without struggles, without difficulties.

[26 : 07] That is some blessing. That is glorious. That is what we are waiting for. This is what we long for, God's future grace.

This is what it will be. so that means that one day our purity is one day going to be completed. What God has started in the past, what he is doing in our lives right now will be finished, will be completed. This is what we have to look forward to.

This is what we have been promised. We are not there yet. We are still living, look at the end of verse 12, in this present age, in this present time.

But we are waiting for grace to bring it all to completion. So let God's future grace inform your mind and shape your heart.

[27 : 10] Let him tell you and remind you that one day you will be like Christ, that it's worth all the struggles, it's worth all the battles, and he will equip you and enable you.

Let it shape your heart so that we are motivated to live a life of purity. You see, what we're saying is this, is that our only motive, the only motive for the Christian is pure grace.

grace. We don't need the old school report that says try harder. We don't need the old school master standing over us with a stick, tapping it on the desk.

You must do better. You mustn't behave like this. You must behave like this. We need a new kind of motive. We need pure grace.

Look at verse 15. These then are the things that you should teach. encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

[28 : 18] If we are going to be the pure church that God calls us to be, if we're going to grow as we are, then let the grace of God, the pure grace, teach us day after day.

Encourage one another by teaching God's past, present and future grace. But of course, as verse 15 says, there will be times to rebuke.

Because we are those who often turn their back on grace. As we sang earlier, we are often prone to wander, to turn away.

But we need to keep coming back to the grace of God. Together, we need pure motives. We need to be motivated by pure grace.

let's pray together. Let's pray together. Father, we want to thank you again for the many varied and diverse relationships that we all have and we all enjoy, whether we are an older person or a younger person.

[29 : 44] And sometimes that standard, that calling, is to us, we cannot do it. Father, we repent and we turn away from trying harder and doing better in our own efforts, and we turn afresh to your grace, asking that we would be motivated daily by what you have done for us, what you are doing for us, and what you will do for us.

May this grab a hold of us all and may we live out the lives that you call us to so that we will make the teaching of God our Saviour, Jesus Christ, attractive.

May grace flow into our lives so that grace would flow out and bring many people to the grace of Christ himself.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. our final song that we're going to sing.

If you could just flick it up for me there, Graeme. Thank you. One more. ■ death, die, me la lost m pass.

[31 : 38] Father,