

Jesus Died to Redeem

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Preacher: Matt Usherwood

[0 : 00] Dear Heavenly Father, thank you that we're able to come together, we're able to meet in a building, we're able to pray to you, we're able to reflect about you, we're able to hear your word, we're able to look at your word.

Father, I just thank you for that privilege. I ask, Lord, that your Holy Spirit right now would just calm our minds, that we would hear just your voice. Lord, that you would just speak to our inner desires.

If anyone here is feeling the pressures of being in isolation, any despair of the chaos that's going on in this world, I ask, Lord, that you would just comfort them and they would hear your word.

In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. So, when I was a photojournalist, I was always, you always had to have your own car.

Because you have to be at the mercy of a call, you have to go right away to somewhere to take a photo of either a crime scene or a fire or any city event. I was a freelancer.

[1 : 14] And this time came in 2015 when my first car broke down. And at the same time, I had a really big job to do the next day. So, I was in a quick rush to buy a car.

So, I ended up buying a brand new car. I'm not going to say the brand because I don't want to talk the brand down or try to convince you of a different car company to buy. That's not the point of this.

But what happened is I bought it in 2015. And by 2017, I had driven over 100,000 kilometers. And the thing when you buy a new car, normally after the 100,000 kilometer mark, your warranty for the engine stuff, just it ends at the 100,000 kilometer mark.

Unless you pay for the extra warranties. But at that moment, I was pretty strapped for cash. So, I didn't. And what actually happened two years later in 2017, the engine stopped.

When I was around 5,000K over the warranty. So, in that moment, I felt very distraught.

[2 : 20] Like, I just bought pretty much like it's a new car. Like, it's only two years old. And the engine just ended. And I didn't know what to do. So, I called them. And I asked, like, I just, I wanted them to help me out.

Because, like, a two-year-old car, like, it should be fine. Anyone who buys a new car, like, you would expect it to last more than two years, regardless of how many kilometers you put on it. And what they told me was just a flat-out no.

We cannot, there's nothing we can do about it. Even though you've been doing all the oil changes with us. Even though you've been getting the service checks whenever you're supposed to. There's nothing we can do.

And if you want this fixed, it's going to cost you \$5,000 to get a new engine. And I just couldn't, like, I couldn't afford that. So, I was, me and Amy, because I was married at that time, we were just at a loss of what to do.

We had no idea what to do. We prayed. We felt pretty hopeless. Because, like, with my job and then just very outdoor active lifestyle, you want a car.

[3 : 22] You need a car to get around to things. And after, around, like, two days afterward, we just felt so despair, like, completely lost, like, no hope. They called, I got a phone call from them in the morning.

And they just said that, you know what, we will, we'll fix the engine for you. Just bring it in and we'll cover it all. And they didn't have to do that. They didn't have to cover anything for me.

Because, technically, I was in the wrong. I was over the warranty, over the 100K, and they decided to do it. And I felt very grateful.

So, I'm still driving that car. There's been some other issues, but that's a different story. I won't get into that. And today, all through the summer, if you've been coming here every Sunday, we've been going through a series called The Crucified Messiah.

And this week, the title of the sermon is called Jesus Died to Redeem. So, if you haven't already, turn to Titus, chapter 2, verses 11 to 14.

[4 : 25] And we'll just take a look at that. Because the story I just told really fits with the whole idea of redemption. So, the context of Titus is Paul and Titus had just done a trip to the Crete Island in the Mediterranean Sea.

And he left Titus there because new churches just sprang up. So, they needed a leader. So, this epistle, this letter, is written to Titus. And it's Paul telling him what he needs to do in the face of persecution, what you need to do in the face of false teaching.

It's a very Greek society there. So, there's a lot of all these different gods and stuff like that. So, this is Paul writing to Titus. It's a very personal letter.

It's telling him how he needs to organize his leadership, how he needs to run the church in the face of false teaching. And before I read the first verse, I would like to ask three questions.

If someone wronged you or owed you something, would you want them to make it right or pay you back? You don't have to answer out loud, just for you to think about.

[5 : 37] Or, if you did something for someone, would you want them to act a certain way? Afterwards, you did something really nice for them. We can all agree, or most of us can agree, that deep down inside, we want that.

We want people to do something for us after we've done a nice act for them. Or if we've lent someone money, we want them to do a nice... We want to be paid back.

But here, Paul's not talking about... Paul is talking about this unmerited grace, this unmerited redemption. And he's really getting Titus to tell himself personally to reflect on it, and then also to tell his congregation to reflect on it and to live a certain way.

And we are to also look at this text, because the Bible wasn't just written for then, it's written for now as well, because it's God's word. But we need to reflect on it as well.

So I'll begin in verse 11. For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people. Now, Paul, right off the bat, with what he said before, because in verse 11 it says, for the grace of God.

[6 : 52] So whenever you see for, or therefore, or surely, surely, you need to look back at what was just said, because it gives the context of what's being said in that moment.

So Paul is just, is telling Titus, because of all this stuff, because of the, you need to teach sound doctrine, because you need to live a certain way, you need to have certain qualifications for elders, you need to look to the grace of God to teach you how to act in the future events.

Because he says, for the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people. That is what he's talking about. He is talking about Jesus crucified.

He's talking about Jesus rising from the dead. You need to look at that. You need to, that should be your lens for how you go forward in life and how you train people up. And Jesus was seen by hundreds of people.

So in light of that event, of this gracious event, this unmerited grace event, you need to live that way. Now, some of you might be saying, well, this text, doesn't, isn't it saying right here, for the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people.

[8 : 07] Aren't you saying, isn't that, isn't salvation for all people then? Because the text right here in verse 11 says that. Isn't, isn't, like, why, why is the church so obsessed with trying to convert people then if salvation is for everyone?

Why, why should I repent or change if salvation is for everyone? Why can't I just live the way I want and be saved?

If, if it says right here that salvation is for everyone, shouldn't I just be able to do what I want, live my life, do all, do all that? Well, isn't that just like, when you think about it, that's just the sound, that's like the anthem of our culture we live in today.

It was also the anthem of the culture back then. That, these certain things, like, don't tell me what to do. We hear that all the time. Or, live your life. Be free.

I was, I was born this way. We're all in this together. That's a very popular one. Or, coexist. Why can't we all coexist?

[9 : 13] But really, when you pick it apart, when you pick these things apart, they're very hollow words. They're very hollow. There's nothing to them. Because as soon as someone does something, when someone proclaims, these slogans, when they do something, that doesn't fit their mold, or if they have it, the person has a different opinion, than the person saying, be saying these slogans, right away, they get excommunicated.

They get ostracized. They get slandered. They get called like a bigot. Or like, you just, you're so narrow-minded, you just like, can't see it. Or, if someone does something, that the person feels wronged about, like very personally wronged, they want, they demand a redemption, for what that person did.

They demand, almost a sacrifice. A sacrifice needs to be done, for that event. And there's, this also happens, when great, big, chaotic things happen in our world.

People always want someone, to be held accountable. Someone must be held accountable, for that event. See, these slogans, go against the very, our very human nature, our inner, this inner brokenness, that we always demand, to be right.

Things to be made right. And it has to cost something. See, verse 11, is the text, that, the doctrine of universalism, which is the doctrine, that these people, say that, everyone is saved.

[10 : 43] Everything is fine. You can live however you want, you're saved in the end. This is what, verse 11 is what, this is where they get, one of the things they get that from. Where they get, all is saved. That there's no consequences, for your actions.

But that belief, has no footing. Because, you can't just pick verses out, you have to continue. You can't just, pick one verse, and that's how you live everything, regardless of this, this book, of all these other pages.

See, the doctrine of universalism, or that all are saved, it's very deceptive. It's a very unfortunate thing. It's as deceptive, as when, in the Garden of Eden, when the serpent, was debating with Eve, about to eat the apple, that, you can get the knowledge of God, you can be like God, and, and it says, that the serpent said to her, surely, you will not die.

It's almost, that's almost what the, the doctrine of universalism teaches, that you'll be like God, that you can do what you want, and nothing will happen, there's no consequences. But, in verse 12, it kind of shuts that down.

So, I'll continue on, but I'll read verse 11 again. 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.

[12 : 11] So, if, if verse 11 is teaching, that all are saved, why then, in the next breath, it says, to renounce ungodliness, to renounce worldly passions, to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives.

They just like, it doesn't line up, if you read the, if you read the flow of the text. Because if you really, and then if you look at it even more, self-controlled, to live self-controlled, like what is, what does that mean?

Self-controlled is, to be in control of like, your emotions, your anger, to be, not swayed by, money or greed, to make wise decisions.

Self-controlled, is to make wise decisions, regardless of what you're going through. Obviously, that's hard at times, easier said than done. It's to hold down a job, to be controlled in your job, not to, at the whim, just leave, and go to the next, it's to be controlled.

It's to, and it could also, for some people, is to be controlled, it's just, or not to be controlled, to be self-controlled, it's just to be a good person. And then in the next, it also says, upright lives.

[13 : 23] It's to be nice to people, hospitable, it could be a respected member of the community. And then it also says, godly lives. Godly lives, is just following God's, it could be God's law, it's to be upright.

And then really, like God's law, it's thou shalt not murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, it's to honor your parents. These are all things, deep down, we strive for.

But, our culture says, the church, the church teaches this doctrine, or has this belief, that you can't have fun, that you have to be a fundamentalist.

But this doesn't sound like, the way our culture perceives the church. This sounds like, the way our culture actually, they want these attributes. They want them.

And it's very interesting, because then if you also look, at the beginning of verse 12, when it says, to renounce ungodliness, and worldly passions. Like, what is that?

[14 : 26] See, ungodliness is the opposite, of following God's, moral laws. So that's, like, committing murder. That's committing adultery. These are things that, we don't want to strive for.

Worldly passions. Worldly passions are, things that just, like, control you. It could be, like, the control of, like, idols in your life.

See, our culture, always claims, that the church, teaches, that you can't have any fun, you can't do anything. But right here, it's talking about, actually, these are things, everyone wants.

It's really interesting. And continuing, into verse 13, or, hold on, it says, present age. So what does that mean? Just say that really briefly. Present age is the age, that you live in.

So back, it's the age that they're, at this time as written, that was their present age, we are now in our present age. And we are to live accordingly, with all that around, surrounding us. In verse 13, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory, of our great God, and Savior, Jesus Christ.

[15 : 36] Now, what, what is hope? This sounds like, like, being mad, this sounds like, a fairy tale. This sounds like, a good story. Good, a good story.

And it's really interesting, if you, let's dig into that, into the good story. It sounds like, a good work of fiction. Some of you might be, thinking to yourself, and if we think about it, like, why, why is it, in these great works of fiction, like Lord of the Rings, or the modern one, Harry Potter, or like, Greek mythology, from back in the day, why is, why does it, why does it capture us?

Capture our imaginations. Why does fiction do that? These stories, these stories that have, that have heroes, in the beginning, and there's always, the character plot, there's always the characters, you kind of relate to, and you don't like.

There's the events, that start bringing up, the character. There's hardships, there's wars. There's the, there's always that moment, in the story of hopelessness, of despair, when there's no hope, and then the hero rises up.

Have you ever thought, how much the Bible, is like that? How from the beginning, to the end, there's this plot line, that runs through it. There's, there's the beginning, there's the wars, there's the people of God, who are, who become isolated, who get cast out, who become slaves, who are then redeemed, and then again, are cast out again.

[17 : 05] And then there's the Savior, Jesus, comes. But there's, there's a big difference, between works of fiction, and the Bible. The Bible is based, on historical events, and historical people.

Everything in the Bible happened. Like, Jesus came. God came, and walked among us. These, historical event, he came, he died, it's written about. People saw it.

People who didn't believe in Jesus, saw it. It has been written about. You see, the Bible, is what, is the greatest story, ever told. It speaks to our greatest longings. It speaks to our inner, our inner desires.

The things that we find, that everyone finds so much, just the stories of fiction, we wish that are true. The Bible is true. The Bible is the ultimate story. It's the gospel message.

The gospel message. You see, we are to, we are to put our faith, and trust in Jesus, because the cross happened. We are to live this way, because the cross happened.

[18 : 11] As Paul is writing to Titus about. We are to live this way, with a hope, because the story isn't finished. The battle has been won. The battle is won at the cross, but the story is not finished.

The story will be finished, when Jesus returns, when he comes to judge, the living and the dead. And in verse 14, Paul is continuing here.

I'll read 13 again. 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, to purify for himself, a people, for his own possession, who are zealous, for good works.

See, Paul here, in verse 14, is telling Titus, to focus back on the cross. The cross is, is the marker, in your life, in the life, that you're to live now, this way.

You see, we've all broken God's law. When we were lost in lawlessness, at the beginning, when Eve and Adam ate the apple, everyone in the human race, became lost.

[19 : 24] And we needed a savior. Just like how our culture, demands a sacrifice, for what our forefathers did, or how they acted, God demands a sacrifice, or demanded a sacrifice, for what Adam and Eve did.

But God, in his great mercy, knew we could never pay for it, but sent his son, who willingly sacrificed himself, for us. He redeemed us, from the death we deserved.

See, when you put your faith, and trust in Christ, into Jesus Christ, and commit to living for God, he makes you one of his people. He purifies you. He does it, you don't do it.

He does it. He purifies for himself, a people, for his own possession. He didn't have to do it. But he did, he chose to do it.

Just like, I hope kind of, like at the beginning, with my car, like they didn't have to do it, but they chose to do it. They, they, they, they, redeemed the situation, unmeritedly. They didn't have to.

[20 : 28] That's the gospel story. The gospel story is, we are redeemed by grace. We're not redeemed by, the works we do, but through, that grace, through being saved, it's the, teach us to live, an upright, self-controlled, godly lives.

Now I know, again, that's easier said than done, and we all struggle. I personally struggle with things. But if you go back to verse 12, at the beginning of verse 12, it says, training us.

You see the cross? When we reflect on the cross, and put our faith and trust in it, it trains us, to live godly lives. It's like athletes. When you, when people become athletes, they don't, right away, just become the greatest athlete, there ever could be.

They have, they put years, of training into it, of work. They're constantly committed to it. They, they change, they take a complete 180, to how they live their lives.

And that's very much, like, how it is to be a Christian. You have to, you have to lay down your life, for Christ. It isn't that you just, go to Sunday, go to church on Sunday, and then you live your life, completely opposite, to what the Bible teaches.

[21 : 49] See, being called, a Christian, is a very high calling. But it is, an unmerited calling. It is a redeemed calling. It's not an earned calling.

It's a purchased calling. And that is purchased, through the death, of Jesus Christ. You see, when you, when you put your faith, and trust in Jesus, you're able to sing, that, that good hymn, Jesus paid it all.

You can proclaim it. You can sing it, as loud as you can. You can say, Jesus paid it all. All to him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain, and he washed, washed it white as snow.

That is such a great, such a great verse, in that hymn. And if you haven't put your faith, and trust in Jesus, if you haven't, turned to him, if you haven't, called out to him, Lord save me, now is, the greatest time, to do it.

Because we're in the present age, but there is another age coming, and all, will give account. So I would just urge you, if you haven't, to do that. And if you have, if you're here, and you call yourself a Christian, if you know what it is, to follow Jesus, I would just encourage you, to just, reflect on, what it is to be, redeemed by grace, to be, be redeemed by Christ.

[23 : 18] Let us pray. Heavenly Father, Father, I thank you for the cross. I thank you, that you sent, Jesus, to us, when we didn't deserve it.

When we didn't deserve, to be saved. We deserve, a sinner's death. But you chose, in your great mercy, to, to just save us, to call us, to be your people.

I ask Lord, if there's anyone here, who struggles with that, or anyone who's watching online, who's struggling with that, that they would just call to you. That they would know, it doesn't need to be, a big fancy prayer.

It just needs to be, Jesus, come into my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.