

The Believer's Walk and Purpose

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[0 : 00] I would like it that you, I would like it, if you would turn in your Bible to Psalm 150.! Now, we're not changing our series. I will get to Ephesians in just a minute. But this is a two-for-one morning. That means that you get an extra sermon for free. And this is going to be very, very short.

Let me kind of give you the starting point. Listen to me carefully. Good theology informs and governs our worship. I'll say that slowly. Good theology informs and governs our worship. Psalm 50. I want you to read it with me, but I want you to imagine kind of the placid and moderately indifferent spirit with which such a text should be read. How many of you understood what I meant there? Okay. Praise the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary. Praise Him in His mighty heavens. Praise Him for His mighty deeds. Praise Him according to His excellent greatness. Praise Him with the trumpet sound. Praise Him with the lute and harp. Praise Him with tambourine and dance. Praise Him with strings and pipe. Praise Him with sounding cymbals. Praise Him with loud clashing cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Hey, listen to me. If you're uncomfortable doing that here, it may be because you're not clear about there. Am I being too cryptic this morning? Maybe I'm not communicating clearly. In other words, hey, believers are people who get kind of fired up about Jesus and they enjoy what corporate worship is because good theology, which is the teaching of the scriptures, nothing else. Good theology informs and governs our worship. Okay. Having said that, we're going to do a little bit of theology and we're going to look at one of the phenomenal, there are so many phenomenal passages in Ephesians, so bear with me, but we're going to look at Ephesians chapter 2, verse 10. And I want to begin with a simple little statement that I'm going to ask that you write down. Here it is. Good works do not produce salvation. Write it down. Good works do not produce salvation, but salvation produces good works. I want you to understand that this is a foundational truth and it is an important one. Good works do not produce salvation, but salvation produces good works. At the heart of our lesson today is a valuable teaching that balances the doctrine of the gospel and tells us that the salvation that we enjoy is the work of God and that when God works, it's undeniably evident. God does it and when He does it, we can see it. I think it's important to balance truth and it's important to recognize these two pieces together because when we do not keep the scriptures where they justly belong and we do not rely upon the scriptures to inform our thinking, we end up swinging to one tangent or the other and we end up sorely misguided and we end up in false doctrine.

These tangents of thought that are balanced in this Ephesians chapter 2, verse 10 passage can play out in that there are some churches that teach that one has to add meritorious works to what Christ did on the cross. In other words, if you want to be saved, and you've probably bumped into some of these people, you ask them, so if you were to die tonight, do you know for certain that you're going to spend time in heaven?

[4 : 24] You're going to go to heaven? And the person says, well, I'm sure hoping so. And I have bumped into many people that have said to me without hesitation, nobody has the right to assume that they're going to heaven. Why is that? Well, because there's a lot that needs to be done and if you want to be saved, yes, you have to believe in Jesus, but you also have to be baptized, you have to go to church on a regular basis, you have to do all the good things that go along with it, and without those things, you have no right, no reason to hope that you would be saved.

On the other side, there are churches that teach that good works have nothing at all to do with salvation and that simply justification by faith has no expectation of a changed life.

They teach that salvation need not work. So on one side, we have the idea that the church teaches that apart from work, salvation won't happen, and on the other side, we have the church that teaches that salvation doesn't need to do anything or it doesn't show itself in any way.

Incidentally, when you get caught up in reading through the Scriptures, particularly in the New Testament, you'll find that there seems to be some tension between the writings of the Apostle Paul on the doctrine of grace and the writings of James. Remember, James is the one who said something like this, faith without works is dead. And it seems to be, well, Paul and James must not have gotten along together and they were on poles apart. That's not true at all. Both of them were directing their letters in particular to particular groups of people that were struggling with various doctrinal error. Paul was addressing those who had struggled with the doctrine of grace and realizing that we are saved by God's power alone. And James, dealing with individuals who thought, well, no big deal. I can say I'm saved and doesn't make any difference in the way I behave. The Bible doctrine announces that God's grace, which justifies, also produces works. I want you to have that stuck in your mind. The Bible doctrine teaches us that God's grace, which justifies and saves us, also produces works. And if you were looking for a one-verse summary of who saves and what happens as a result of it, Ephesians chapter 2 verse 10 would be that go-to verse. I want you to look at it with me just for a moment. For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. So let me begin by starting out with this very clear point. The believer is a thing of God's making. The believer is a thing of God's making.

[7 : 19] I like the way that Paul gets right to the point here in this verse. He says, we are His workmanship. And there's no doubt that Paul was thinking about the matter of genuine conversion. He was talking about the individual who has been genuinely saved rather than a person who at an emotional point in their life made some kind of decision under emotional duress or perhaps under some pressure. And they said the right words, they prayed the prayer, but there was nothing that followed that gives any indication of the authenticity of their salvation. The word that Paul uses here, workmanship, is a word that communicates in the Greek the idea of something that was made. In other words, it puts it this way, it's a thing of His making. The word was used to refer to anything that an artisan had produced, whether it was a sculpture or if it was a particular crafted item or a poem. In fact, it's actually the Greek word is poema. What does that sound a little bit like? Anybody here a literature major besides me in my past life?

Poems. Okay, that poem means, ah, that's the craftsmanship of someone who is a word crafter. Okay, the poem is a poema. It's something that was made by someone. And what that word communicates is that somebody did something. And by looking at what you see or you can hear, you immediately recognize that, ah, that came from someone. Someone had a part to play in that. The existence of the object of work is never thought of in the Greek independent of the creative will and power of the one who made it.

And, ah, the thing that was made or is made is understandably a testament and an illustration that points back to the individual who's the creator or the maker of it. I was thinking about this earlier in the week and I thought back to my high school days and, ah, I, I really wasn't a scholar of any sort. And, ah, there were choices of the kind of classes you could take. I thought that physics was a non-starter for me. Do you understand that? I took algebra once and then I took it a second time just to be sure I had the points right. And, ah, while the rest of my class went on and did things like, ah, physics and other things, they asked me if there were any classes I would like since I wouldn't take the, the advanced chemistry and physics. And I said, well, what choices are there? And there was art class. And so I took art class. I want you to know I took art class. And, ah, in God's, ah, sense of humor, I ended up in class with a young man, a student named Madur Kapoor. He moved on eventually to become a nationally recognized artist in India, tremendously skilled. And whatever he put his hands to, whether it was modeling clay or grabbing chalk or what, they'd always, yeah. I mean, he could take a piece of paper and make it look like a horse. Do you follow that? I would take a piece of paper and it looked like a piece of paper with scratchings on it. And I'll never forget in particular when, when, ah, Mr. Swain decided that we needed to work with modeling clay and make a statue.

I, I, everybody started at the same place. We went over to the, the mixing place that they had, that I don't know who all did it, but it was nice and palatable. And, and I grabbed myself what I thought was an adequate lump. And I, I certainly had visions of how this should turn out.

[10 : 52] Madur Kapoor was right along with me and he grabbed a lump of clay and, and, ah, within a short time, Madur's began to look like something was happening there. Mine began to continue looking like it was clay.

Eventually, ah, all of our art pieces got put on a shelf. So, everybody'd walk in and say, well, there's Madur Kapoor's. That's Tim's. Mine looked like, ah, one of those things that you find in an early Mesopotamian dig where children had discarded something they had been making for fun and threw it away. And strangely enough, several thousand years later, some archeologist comes along and says, whoa, look what some little kid made. And I don't, I hope mine was disposed of in a better way than that.

Uh, I don't want anybody finding. I didn't put my initials on or anything like that. Madur did his. But when people would walk into the class, they would look at the shelf with all these models on there and they would say, whoa, whoever did that was an artist and whoever did that should not think about art as a future.

I tell you this because what this verse is telling us is that God's workmanship makes him evident. When you look at what God makes, there's no denying, there's no question that he's the one who did it.

And I think this is important for us to understand that what God makes displays his power and his majesty and his wisdom and his grace. I want you to see this first of all in creation, then think about it in relationship to us. Look, if you will, back in your Bible, turn back to Psalm 19, verse 10, Psalm 19, verse 10.

[12:49] And, um, earlier last week or late last week, I guess there was a meteor that hit Russia, right? And, uh, it got everybody's attention.

And, uh, we look in the heavens and we see just phenomenal illustration of the wisdom and glory of God. Look at what it says. The heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor are there words whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world. What that passage is saying is that when we look up into the firmament, we look up into the heavens, we look up there and say, man, this didn't just happen.

Somebody had something to do with it and it's pretty spectacular. Turn over now, if you will, go from Psalm 19, go over to the book of Romans and I want you to look at Romans chapter 1.

Romans chapter 1, verse 19 through 20. Have you ever bumped into people that say, well, what is going to happen to the person in, uh, the darkest regions of, of Africa who have never heard the gospel?

Are they, are they innocent or are they condemned in their sinful hearts? Romans chapter 1, verse 19. For what can be known about God is plain to them. How plain is it? It's plain. It is plain to them because God has shown it to them for his invisible, his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. The heavens declare the handiwork of God. They are his workmanship. And when you look at them, look at the stars, you look at the things that are up there, you have to recognize somebody did this and who did it is pretty spectacular. Just as a sculpture can be tracked back by virtue of what they made. So God can be tracked back by virtue of what he has made. And what this verse announces there at the beginning, going back to Ephesians chapter 2, it makes it clear that only God gets credit for my salvation, my faith, and my response.

Now, let me add this part and I want you to track it with me. Ability. Why is it that Tim Kenoyer has responded to the grace of God and came to the point of conviction and felt the burden of his sin and recognized that he stood justly condemned before a holy God? It was because of the grace of God and the power of God. And I, along with each of you here this morning that know Christ as your personal Savior, are the workmanship of God. Would you recognize that? The song that we sang this morning, not what my hands have made. Was that song accurate theologically? Absolutely. It tracks exactly what we are looking here in this passage. And there are some very practical truths that flow out of this theological statement. For one, the gospel is profoundly God-focused and man-humbling because what it does is drives us to recognize that who we are is not of our own making, but we are by God's design and for His glory. And so I would ask you this question this morning, just as a little sidebar. When you woke up this morning, did it cross your mind that you exist for His glory and to make Him look good? That's what Scripture teaches us. I am His workmanship, and the purpose of workmanship is to draw attention to the worker behind the scenes. Secondly, I want you to understand that each of us, being the workmanship of God, are unique expressions of the creative power and wisdom of God.

[16:59] There's only one of you. There will never be another one. And one of the things that we all have a tendency of struggling with is comparing ourselves with other people. Don't we do that? By the way, over in 1 Corinthians, it says those who compare themselves with other people are unwise. Having heard the Bible say that, nevertheless, we pick up and what do we do?

We wish we were smarter. We wish we were taller. Or some people wish they were shorter. Some people wish they were stronger. And other people wish they weren't quite as bulky as they are. You know how it all goes. We're always comparing ourselves. I wish, I wish. Listen, God made you, and there's only one of you. And He didn't make an accident. He made you expressly for His glory. And He made you unique so that you would be an expression of His workmanship.

Andrew Wyeth. Anybody here ever see the paintings of Andrew Wyeth? Come on, nod at me or shake your head. Andrew Wyeth. Anybody ever pay attention to Andrew Wyeth? I love Andrew Wyeth's paintings.

Some of you are saying, huh, who cares? It's all right. Andrew Wyeth was exceptionally gifted at very fine and meticulous artwork. And when he painted a tree, it actually looked like a tree. When I would draw trees, this is an art class. People, don't try, Tim. Just take a D and leave. You know, it's like, okay. One of the nice things about Andrew Wyeth is that there was actually quite a bit of variety in the different things he painted. You'd look at one thing and say, wow, man, look at that. I just kind of soak that in and really like. Then go to the next Andrew Wyeth. Wow, I can't believe that. See, a creative person makes something spectacular out of everything they put their hands to. And God's put His hands on you and He's made you who you are for His glory and you're the only copy there ever will be. And you have a particular call and a particular job that God expects you to do and is not looking for anybody else to do. I want you to understand that you were made as a separate and planned display of His glory. And your purpose is to make that evident in your life and the way you live. And He made you for His express purpose. I like the fact that when you ask yourself the question, so what am I here for? Why do I exist? What's my purpose in life? To the believer, it is this. It's simple. I exist to bring glory to the creating God and to His Son, the Lord Jesus

[19:31] Christ. That's why I draw breath. And the day I finish that job, God will take me home to be with Christ and to enjoy eternity forever. That brings us to the second part that I want us to focus on this morning. Look at the passage. It says there in verse 10, for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. And let me just kind of remind you as we look at this passage and created in Christ Jesus, what the Spirit is telling us here is that we are Christ's creation and we are in Him. I have touched on the matter of being in Christ several different times already in our studies in the matter of Ephesians, but let me tell you something. The matter of your relationship in Christ, in Christ, in Christ is of profound significance to your well-being. You are in Christ. You are in a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and everything about you is connected to that fact.

Is there anything more important than your relationship in Christ? And the answer is no. No. And it says here that we are created in Christ Jesus. Then it goes on and explains that being His creation, we were created for a purpose. Why did He make me? Why did He make you? Let's recognize that He made us for good works. And so I want you to look at several different passages that make this clear. Turn back, if you would, where I go back to 2 Corinthians 5, verse 17. 2 Corinthians 5, verse 17.

Verse 17. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new what? How many of you remember what it was like, the before and after of your conversion? Do you remember what it was like? There was a time when you would wake up in the morning and the day was dark, not because the sun wasn't shining, but because of the pall and the gloom that was cast over your life by an unrepentant and sinful heart. And there was hardship and there was difficulty, there was sorrow and there was despair. And the day came where the grace of God helped you see the absolute depravity of your heart and brought you to the place of repentance. And you cried out and said, Jesus saved me. And what happened? He did. And what it did, what happened at that point is, as it says here, if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a what? He's a new creation. He's something different than he was. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come. I want you to look at another passage in which we see this played out. And I want you to turn in your Bible to Titus. Go over to Titus chapter 1, verse 16.

Titus chapter 1, verse 16. Very interestingly, here is Paul in the process of correcting some theological error that had crept into the church. There were individuals who were teaching false doctrine.

[22 : 45] And one of the very obvious giveaways of their false doctrine was the life that they were living.

Do you follow that? You can see false doctrine by what it produces. So let's track that back. You can see genuine doctrine by what it produces. Follow that? False doctrine seen in false living. And there in verse 16, they profess to know God. In other words, they're making a theological statement about, yes, I have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. And yet what it says there, but they deny Him by their works. They're saying one thing with their lips, and their life is a complete contradiction of what they're saying. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

Unfit means what? They can't pull it off. Now, they can temporarily go through the motions, but in the long run, tested under adversity and difficulty, good works don't rise out of them.

Good works that accrue or draw attention to the glory of Christ. Look forward, if you will. We're in Titus chapter 1, verse 16. But recognize what follows that statement about false teachers. There in chapter 2, verse 1, it says, but as for you, Titus is saying, teach what accords with sound doctrine.

[24 : 11] On the contrary, instead of being a false teacher who teaches false doctrine that shows up in false living, you are to teach true doctrine. And we play on down through it and come to verse 14.

Speaking of our salvation, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and purify for Himself a people for His own possession that are zealous for good works. Zealous for good works.

A people of His own possession that are zealous for good works. So let me ask you a question.

When you think about the mindset and the attitude that you have towards Christian living, do you find yourself thinking, well, I really don't like this business of being a Christian because it places unrealistic expectations on me in the community that I live in. Everybody else is doing whatever and I've got to be different. And I don't like being different. When other people swear, I'd like to swear.

When other people act like boors, I'd like to, you know, hey, I want to fit in.

And we are pressured to do that. Am I right or wrong? The community we travel in has an effect on us. But it really comes down to why you exist and what your purpose is. If you exist for the glory of Christ and to make Him look good. Now, I'm not talking around, walking around with a little standard sign that says, I'm a holy person. I want you to know that. But hey, listen to me. All you have to do is act like Jesus wants you to and people figure out you're different. Would you agree with that? When people are being lecherous, when people are laughing at a crude and filthy joke and you don't join them, what do they think? Either you have hard of hearing or they didn't tell the joke properly. I won't go with, I was going to tell a story and I won't tell that one. I will tell that one.

There's a particular place I go on a periodic basis where when I come into this particular shop and I've been going to that same place for since Grover was a pup, you know, that's a long time.

[26 : 15] And I walk in there and immediately, I don't walk in saying, by the way, Pastor Kenoyer is coming through the door, please change vocabulary. But I come in and the joke that is being told gets finished off and things stop. The one guy actually begins to sing hymns.

And then he'll say, Reverend Kenoyer, have you heard this one? And every now and then I have to remind him that there are certain ones that I haven't heard and I don't want to hear.

And I don't go out of my way. You follow me? I've been there for many years and it's kind of a joke, but not going many years, but people figure out who you are and what you connect with. Am I right? Here's what Titus says. Look at the passage again. Titus chapter 2 verse 14. It says that we are his possession who are zealous for good works. For good works. So what we see in 2.14 is that the marker of genuine conversion, let me say that slowly, the marker of genuine conversion is an

interest in the right kind of things.

Can I tell you that we live in a day and age, I think we're on the downward swing of the issue of easy believism. What I mean by easy believism is, you know, there's a lot of pressure and a lot of emotion attached to it and then there are a whole lot of people who make professions, but then there's really no outcome that shows a converted life. And the church has suffered deeply because of easy believism and because of decisional theology. The fact of the matter is that scripture makes it very clear that genuine conversion produces transformation and that should be part of gospel preaching and part of helping people understand what does it mean to be saved. Titus makes it

clear. He says, listen, there are people out there that are teaching false doctrine and the way you can spot them is their life doesn't match what they say about knowing God. Knowing God thus makes a difference in the life of the believer. Does this mean that the new believer never sins after conversion? How many would like that to be true? Wouldn't that be a keeper? I have dear friends that believe in entire sanctification, the idea that eventually you can keep on working at it and eventually you get good enough that you don't sin anymore. I've had friends that were very close to me that held to that and when I would ask them, so what is it when you get angry? They say, well, I'm having an attitude problem, but that's not a sin. Well, I suppose if you kind of flex the explanation of what sin is, you probably get away with that. But the truth of the matter is, sin is sin and it's a violation of the Word of God, the law of God, the character of God, right? How many have trouble spotting sin? I mean in other people. We're good at that. I want you to understand that the believer does struggle with sin, but the genuine believer who is a new creation has a new desire to do right. Do you follow that?

[29 : 31] There's a change of interest and a change of ambition, and whereas in the past the unbeliever would sin and not think anything of it, the genuine convert now when they sin, they think, whoa, that's not me. That's not what I've been created for. I am his workmanship, and this behavior is unbecoming to a child of the king. I do want you to notice something else in the verse.

Going back to Ephesians 2, verse 10, it says, For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works. And I want you to understand that what it is talking about is behavior that brings glory to the Father. It demonstrates his heart and his character, and it reflects favorably on him. I want you to notice as it says there in the passage that not only did he plan our salvation, but he also prepared beforehand the works that we would do.

I want you to imagine that the God who would put together the plan of salvation did not decide after he saved us and he made us to be particular workmanship that he just decided, well, hey, have him go do whatever. It doesn't make any difference. He who saved us has also stipulated what good works look like. Do you follow that? Good works, what do they look like?

The Scripture tells us, as you look at the passage in verse 10, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. And how do we know what good works are? I'll give you a definition in two little pieces here. Number one, good works are something characterized in Scripture as works that display the character, the heart, the interest of the Father. Does that make Dad look good?

And by the way, Dad hasn't kind of left us in a vacuum without instruction. The Word of God's given to us to help us understand that's what God wants, and that's not what He wants. But there's a second thing that is characteristic of good works, and follow me. It is works that reflect the heart and affection of Christ for the gospel. Going down to a soup kitchen or deciding you're going to do some socially responsible thing is not bad. But if it has no attached commitment or impact on the testimony of Christ, what value is it to the King? What's the answer? Everybody shake their head, it's not doing anything. You can go plant a thousand trees. It's all good for global warming, whatever. But if it has nothing to do with gospel impact, has it made a difference in the testimony of God and the impact of the gospel? Well, it depends if you never say anything about it. Well, I'm planting trees because

[32 : 25] I'm a steward of this earth, and it belongs to God. And Jesus, after He saved me, stopped me from being this self-centered squanderer of what belongs to Him, and I'm planting trees to make Him look good. Now, that's gospel testimony. You can plant trees that way. But going around doing all these kind of good works that have nothing to do with gospel impact is something that is suspect. And I bring that up because we are living in a day and age where I see more and more evangelical churches involved in a lot of social consciousness, and that's good. There was a time when, well, all we did was, if I wasn't nailing someone with the gospel, I wasn't doing anything, well, the pendulum has swung over here. And there's a lot going on, and there is no gospel witness and no gospel credibility. I want to tell you something.

Don't detach good works from the glory of God and the gospel. And our desire to be engaged in doing that which honors God also brings out a desire that the gospel be understood and clarified in all that we do. Why are you different? Why are you different? You're not different because of your upbringing. Do you understand that? Because what it says in Scripture, you are of your father the... Now, hold. Don't go home and say to your dad. I do want you to know that the pastor made it clear. The fact of the matter is, is that all of us, apart from the grace of God, we're sinners, justly condemned before a holy God. And he and his kindness saved us from the hopelessness of our

condition, and he's made us new creations, and new creations that are zealous to do the things that bring credit to his name. So let me close off by having you look at a passage in Philippians just for a moment. Philippians chapter 2, verse 12 and 13. I don't know if you have this underlined, but it's a very interesting illustration of one of the principles in Scripture. A lot of times when there are difficult truths...now follow me. Everybody look up just for a minute. A lot of times where there are difficult truths that involve the sovereignty of God with the responsibility of man, they are placed close together. Do you know why they're placed very close together? So you don't miss the connection. Philippians chapter 2, verse 12 and 13 is one such illustration.

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now not only as in my presence, but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Get to it.

Oh, there's more? Yes. For it is God who works in you both to will and to work his good pleasure. [35 : 28] What does it mean to will? It means to want to, right? How many of you have had your mom say to you, come out and help with the dishes? And you thought to yourself, not now.

Or your wife says, honey, and you say, inside. You don't say it publicly, you know, but just kind of...how many of you have ever pretended you didn't hear? That works too. Not now. To will means when the call comes, you jump up and you, yeah, what do you want? I didn't hear exactly what you said, but I'm here.

To will and to do his good pleasure. Another passage I really like in relationship to this is Colossians chapter 1, verse 29. This is a keeper, along with all the other verses in the Bible, by the way. But what I'm saying is you can underline this and I won't be offended. Okay. Colossians 1, 29.

For this I toil, struggling with all his energy, that he powerfully works within me. So, if you're off a dead center and you're working and something's going on in your life, that's how you know that you're saved. And by the way, if you're sitting here and you don't see any evidence of the transforming power of the gospel, there's nothing different about your life, there's no interest that has bearing on eternity, you probably have a good reason to kind of turn the page and check your birth certificate.

So, let's ask the question, what's the believer been hardwired for? The statement is this, the believer is hardwired by salvation with a desire to make Christ look good. That's what it's about.

[37 : 10] The believer is hardwired by salvation with a desire to make Christ look good. That's the way we live. And by the way, if you don't see that interest and that affection in your life, I want to appeal to you that one of two things has happened. You may have drifted away, and what it says in the book of Revelation is that you may have lost your first love. Do you realize we have this perverse, incessant struggle with self inside? How many of you understand that? There's always this little battle of who gets to be God at the moment. And when things aren't going your way and you get miffed and irritated, it's because you've been worshiping at the wrong altar. But when our heart has been tuned by the Spirit of God to love the Lord God with all our heart and all our might, our interest is in making Him look good. And we work towards that end. So let me start with a closing question, several. Do you understand that the gospel announces that you are His workmanship and you're all about making Him look good? Ask that question to yourself. Do I understand that I am the product of the grace and power of God and I exist to make Him look good? Is that clear in your mind? It's all about Him, not me. Do you see Him at work leading you to desire the things of God? Remember that passage that we looked at in Titus chapter 2? It said that we are His possession and the characteristic of those who belong to Him is we're zealous, we're interested, we're passionate about good works.

Do you see the evidence of Him helping you grow and grow in your interest in His glory? I ended up having a conversation last Wednesday evening with a particular individual that had not been able to go to church. In fact, this individual's not been able to go to church for quite some time. And this individual had kind of the attitude of, in the past, when health allowed it, go to church on a regular basis. But this person couldn't go this particular night. As I later on ended up in conversation talking with the person, I said, so what did you do while we were at church?

Oh, well, what I did was I called on three of the people in our fellowship that are shut-ins, and I called to encourage them, and I called to pray with them.

So how are you going to do when you get shut in? Can I tell you it's happening for all of us here? Father, eventually the day is coming when you are not able to do what you'd like to do now.

And if your heart does not have a desire for the glory of Christ and an interest in making Him look good, you may just sit at home and fuss about the fact that you've gotten old. And by the way,

nobody likes you. And nobody's calling you. And it just doesn't seem fair.

[40 : 13] Or you can pick up the phone and think about other people that are in a mess, and you can call them up and say, hey, how you doing? I've been praying for you. Let's go back to that Titus passage so we recognize what it says.

He saved us so that we would be, what? Zealous for good works. Beloved, I want to challenge you this morning to ask yourself the practical question.

Are you His workmanship? Do I see the evidence of a passion for the glory of Christ? Or am I sitting here this morning with a cloud over my soul that represents the burden and the sorrow and the shame and the heartache that sin creates? And I want to tell you, there is no remedy.

There's no solution. But to humble yourself before God and cry out and say, I need Christ who died for my sins and has satisfied that debt.

And I, with humility, say, I need Christ. Let's close in prayer. Our gracious Father, this morning as we revel in the truth of this scripture, as we rejoice in the power of the gospel that has delivered us from darkness and made us to be the children of God, we are recognizing today, because of what this verse says, that we're your workmanship.

[41 : 46] And one of the things that's a giveaway of your workmanship is that those who have been recreated or created anew are people who desire to make Christ look good. Forgive us for the times that we've drifted away from that goal.

Give to us a renewed interest in the glory of our Savior. And for those who are here this morning and do not know the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord, I plead with you that you would touch their hearts this morning and they would be drawn to the cross.

I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.