

# Living Godly in an Ungodly World

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[ 0 : 00 ] you and the rock, there's almost this glow that comes about in their mind and hearts and their eyes because they typically don't get to see that. And I get actually the comments like, well, that's how it should be done very often. So you guys are a mark of humility and faithfulness alongside of other churches that we want to fellowship with. And from Grace Church on 99 to Squamish Baptist Church, we love you. And we are looking forward to ministering together with you.

Turning your Bibles this morning to Titus chapter 3. Titus chapter 3. We finished a series in Titus a number of months ago. And as we head into this new routine of life, we head into the fall and our schedules and activities and our course of ministries get back into what we normally get into. We have access given to people by the Lord. We have more access than maybe we normally do. And we have the opportunities to minister to the world as God grants us the joy and the privilege. I know a couple weeks ago from this pulpit, Chris Mitchell preached on worship and our whole lives being about worship. And last week, Dave talked about pressing on in the faith. And I want to be an encouragement to both of those ends. What does it look like for you and I and for our churches to live a life of worship and to press on in faith with the race that God has called us to?

That you and I and our churches strive together to be lights for the gospel of Jesus Christ in Squamish. So that the mission of the church and the church is to be a light for the gospel. And as we get into Titus, we will learn that a sound, healthy church will maximize that influence and that faithful influence comes by being more Christ-like. So I've entitled the sermon, Living Godly in an Ungodly World. Living Godly in an Ungodly World. And if you would just bear with a little longer intro, I think getting into the book of Titus a little bit would be helpful so we understand Paul's argument to this church-planting pastor on the island of Crete. We live in a world of influence.

[ 2 : 33 ] We are bombarded. You go to your screens in the morning. You go to your jobs during the day. You listen to things on the radio. You are interacting with people all day long. We are influenced by everything around us. And the reality is, as a church, as a body of Christ, we are the influence for the gospel and for truth in the world.

Grace Church on 99, our slogan is grace and truth in the gospel to the world. And SBC, yours, your third point is engaging the world with the gospel. So it is not enough just to soak in the truth and be saturated by the truth and just sit there and do nothing. Both of our slogan statements for our church is, hey, we've got to get out there. But we've got to take what we've learned and we have to go to the lost and dying world with the gospel and communicate what we have been given in Christ. So this is why it's important to us. You and I and our churches know that we are instruments in God's hand to that end. That the Lord is using his body. He's using you and I as instruments to influence the world with the gospel. Our mission and mandate is to preach the gospel to the nations, make disciples of all the nations. And Paul, through Titus, gives specific ways to do that. Some of Christianity might say that for us to influence the world, we have to be more like the world in how we speak and how we act and what we participate in, which is a little bit interesting to me because if we are called to be light and Jesus says that we live in a world of darkness, where would the contrast be if we walk back into gray areas and into darkness so that we could be an influence? How is going back into our old life, into our old man, calling people out of the light?

Darkness leads to more darkness, which leads to more confusion and despair. Light in darkness leads to clarity and to hope. The apostle John goes so far to say in 1 John 1, verse 6, if we say we have fellowship with God, yet walk in darkness, walk in the old life, walk in the old man, we lie and we do not practice the truth. Even John the apostle says at some point, if you know the truth, the goal is to practice, to live out the truth. And that's why Titus is such a small but powerful book to this end. And part of my goal is, after we go through this, is your desire would be, I want to go back to

Titus. I want to see what Titus is all about. Titus is a remedy for this kind of thinking and provides the nutrients to be strengthened. And how we are called to be spiritually healthy in a dark, corrupt world, and how to be a faithful influence. Go to chapter 1 for a moment, because the reason why I use the term remedy in health is because of a word you find often in the book of Titus. If you go to chapter 1, verse 9, you'll see this. Sound doctrine. Sound doctrine. Verse 1 of chapter 2. Sound doctrine.

If you go to chapter 1, verse 13, you'll see this phrase. Sound in faith. Go down to chapter 2, verse 2. Sound in faith. This word sound is a very interesting word. It's where we get our word for hygiene from. It's to cleanse.

[ 6 : 22 ] It's a word that helps us understand that we ought to be healthy in a spiritual sense. Sound doctrine. Good, clean, healthy doctrine. And good, clean, sound, healthy faith.

What is Paul trying to help Titus out as he is sent to the island of Crete? He's helping those believers there understand that what you believe and how you live out those truths is an indication or a barometer of your spiritual health.

Of who you are. And then we broaden that out to the church context. That our doctrinal statements aren't just something we place up onto the website for everyone to see.

But it actually is something that we believe and we live out. So it's not only sound doctrine, but it's sound in faith. Taking truth, believing it, and living it.

If we want to maximize our influence for the gospel and making disciples as a church or groups of believers that get together in a society, it's the same reality.

[ 7 : 30 ] Sound doctrine. Sound in faith. Maximize our spiritual health internally so that we can be of greater influence externally.

We love health in Squamish. You can go to pretty much any corner, any conversation, anywhere in Squamish, and you ask, well, what does it mean to be healthy? You'll probably have conversations all day long.

Different avenues, different perspectives, different thoughts, different opinions. Squamish is a healthy city. Well, let's turn that around to the church.

If those in town came to any one of the churches and asked, well, what does it mean to be spiritually healthy? Would the church in Squamish be able to detail in the same way that I bet you many in Squamish could detail physical health?

Would we be given the right kind of information necessary? Or would we be full of fads and trends and personal opinions? Or we head to the word of God, the living, breathing, infallible word of God, for how he defines what spiritual health looks like individually and corporately as a church?

[ 8 : 42 ] Because that's the point of the book. The point of the book is doctrine and discipleship that adorn our Savior. What you believe and how you live that out as a reflection to Jesus Christ.

Go to chapter 2 again for a moment. These are probably well-worn passages in your Bible. Chapter 2, verse 10. You see that very phrase. Showing all good faith so that you will adorn.

They will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect. That word adorn is to accessorize or accentuate or to beautify. To put something around me as an adornment so that your attention and your gaze and your focus is on that.

And so what Paul is helping Titus do for the believers at Crete is say, when you live, it ought to accentuate. It ought to make everything point to what has happened in salvation through Christ Jesus.

What you believe will point back to Christ. How you live will point back to Christ, both individually and corporately as a church. Turn to chapter 1 for a moment as we continue on this extended introduction.

[ 9 : 59 ] Chapter 1, verse 1. Paul, a bondservant of God and apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth, which is according to godliness.

Go to chapter 3 now. The end of chapter 3, verse 14. Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs so that they will not be fruitful.

So Paul in this entire book is connecting the foundational reality of eternal life given in salvation through Jesus Christ to the practical everyday reality of how you live.

All in three chapters. This is amazing. It takes about probably five to eight minutes in the morning to read this book. And you'll be refreshed. You'll be encouraged.

You'll be strengthened. In all that you believe. In all that you are in Christ. As you go about your everyday routine. In us as a church.

[11:03] But were they to do this in a secluded place? Were they supposed to go up into the mountains in their own little club? Were they to go to some monastery away from the world? No, no. No. They were supposed to do this out in the open in a culture that is not so much different than ours.

Paul is sending Titus to the island of Crete, which is the fifth largest Mediterranean island. It has a long-standing history of Roman culture. Spiritually, they believe that's where actually the god Zeus was born.

So you could see that there would be a little bit of spiritual pride there. That's where our god is from. But culturally, if you go back to chapter one, you can see exactly what is happening.

Chapter one, verse 12. Deception, devious, and derelicts.

That was all that was happening in that culture. It was a culture of wanting all that they can get and taking everything they can. Whether it harms people or not.

[12:13] It is a self-seeking culture where you can get what you want for nothing and take from others. It was a culture that was lacking any moral conviction leading to a moral freefall.

Sound familiar? And we are called as Christians and we are called as a church to live godly in this ungodliness.

So how is it communicated in the overall book of Titus? How to develop spiritual, healthy, growing churches? Well, at the beginning of the book, chapter one, it talks about how God's ministry is the ministry we follow.

That the proclamation of God and his word is the centerpiece because God is a God who proclaimed. Verse three. At the proper time, he manifested even his word in proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior.

So the disciples and the apostles and then the churches after were in the ministry of proclaiming God's word. Because God's word is eternal and it endures.

[13:23] And so if we want our ministries to go beyond to the next generation and to have the right kind of influence, then we stick with what is eternal and what endures and that is God's word and the proclamation of it.

But then he goes on into chapter one. And there is a godly design for the church in leadership. For this reason, verse five, I left you in creed that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you.

That a healthy, functioning, sustaining church is going to have spiritual leaders. They are going to have men of godly character leading the church.

Not only in their character, but in their ability to handle God's word. Verse nine. Holding fast a faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching so that he will be able to both exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

So we can see even here that the ministry of elders is focused and centered on the teaching ministry and the shepherd ministry from the word of God. And then it goes on in chapter one of how they are going to do that.

[14:27] They'll teach. They'll shepherd. They'll encourage in the truth. They'll guard the purity of the church. They're going to guard the doctrine of the church.

Then it goes on into chapter two. Godly leadership then goes on to promote purity within the church. Verse one of chapter two. But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine.

Don't just speak sound doctrine. Don't just teach systematic theology. But actually show how it fits. How it works. How you take sound doctrine.

And then how you live it out in your life. And not only are you supposed to do it to the church. But it's supposed to filter out. And funnel out into the church. Because you have these generational categories.

You have older men and older women. Who have characteristics that they're supposed to put on display. And then the younger generations are supposed to look up to the older men and older women.

[15:26] And to say, that's how it's done. That's how I want to learn. That's how I want to grow. To have a spiritually healthy church that wants to live godly in an ungodly world.

It is where doctrine is guarded and taught and defended. And then it filters out into the rest of the church. Where it's not just the pastors that are doing ministry.

It is the church. It is the church of Jesus Christ that does ministry. Where you have massive influence on one another. Of how you grow. And how you encourage. And how you minister. And how you disciple. The older men are supposed to come alongside the younger men. And to teach them. And the older women are supposed to come alongside the younger women. And are supposed to teach them. A multi-generational ministry.

Coming from the leadership of the church. That is guarding and proclaiming sound doctrine. And then it filters out. And you live it together. Together as a church.

[16:27] We need to build relationships in the church. In this fashion. And in this manner. But we can't do it without grace. You go to the end of chapter 2. You see verse 11.

For the grace of God has appeared. How do we even do that? It's because God has given us the grace to do it. He gives us a spiritual empowerment. So that we can accomplish these things. Because this is God's design for the church. This is God's will for the church. This isn't man-centered. It's not man-created. It wasn't just a good idea that happened a couple thousand years ago.

This is an internal and enduring ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ and his body. So he gives the directions. He gives the instructions. He shows how we are going to be a healthy church. And healthy disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. But then it shifts. It shifts from inside of the church to then outside of the church.

[17:25] And that's how we get to chapter 3. That Paul wants us to understand that when we develop an internal maturity as a church. That we will be a more effective and faithful external witness.

That a sound, healthy church will grow in internal purity. To be a more faithful external witness to the world. So that necessarily means that your participation and your fellowship within your ministries will give you a greater witness to the world.

When we put this opportunity out on social media. One of the verses that just immediately popped into mind was John chapter 13. That the disciples are told by Jesus that the world will know you by your love for one another.

Our love as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ for one another. A tangible expression of sacrifice for us inside the church.

Will give a witness to the world what the true meaning of love is. And I believe we're accomplishing that. And I believe that we can continue to grow in that.

[18:35] And I'm excited for all the work that we will minister together in. Our decisions individually and as a church give a window into what we value and why.

So as we make decisions. As we go out into the world. And as we're thinking about how our lives interact and rub up against all of those who we will see in the world.

Here's where we get to the theme of our passage. We understood the theme of the book. Adorn our Savior and our doctrine and our discipleship. Here's the theme of our passage. That a Christian's behavior in the world ought to model the merciful act of salvation given to them in Christ.

So in the same manner that Jesus Christ, your Savior and mine, granted grace and mercy through his perfect work on the cross.

Although we deserved judgment and wrath. We are called to exemplify that heart. That same desire to attempt to grant mercy and grace to a world that is under judgment and wrath by God himself.

[19:52] Part of the book emphasizes this reality. Good deeds. Good deeds. Good deeds. In chapter 2, the young men are supposed to be examples of good deeds.

In chapter 2 at the end, God gave himself people to redeem his own possession who are supposed to be zealous for good deeds.

We'll get to chapter 3 here in verse 8. We're called to be an example or to engage in good deeds. We already read verse 14. Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds and to meet pressing needs.

So in our discipleship, meaning that we are following Jesus Christ, we are exemplifying how he came down into the flesh and lived in such a way where he was consistently giving others good deeds.

And Paul is very clear here. Those good deeds contribute nothing to your salvation. They contribute nothing to your redemption. And we see that even here. Verse 5.

[ 20 : 52 ] He saved us. Not on the basis of deeds or your translation as BK read, maybe works, which we have done in righteousness. There is nothing that we contributed to it.

But as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, we must understand that reality. That good deeds for a Christian are acts of mercy to a lost world who needs salvation.

Who need to see the benefits of what salvation gave to you. How did Christ save you? How did he actually change you? How did he transform you?

What difference, what contrast, what light are we giving into the dark world? And I know for us, as we see the sinful world, there's going to be a temptation.

One of these temptations is to see the lost world and to show contempt. Almost like a how could they or how dare they kind of attitude. And I think Alistair Begg sums it up well when he says in one of his contexts, Paul is warning the church not to have contempt for the culture around them, but to have compassion for the culture around them.

[ 22 : 02 ] I think it's very easy for us to see how dark the world can get and immediately start to judge them in such a way that we could also have been judged whenever we were lost in our situation.

And that's what this text is helping us understand. That a thriving gospel community will have a thriving desire to meet the needs of the lost world. With the gospel and the needs personally to show the benefits and blessings of the gospel.

And that happens within the context here of the local church. So thank you for this very extended introduction. Let's get to our text here.

Where we have four essential reminders in living godly and ungodly worlds. And so this is just an overview. Pray for me. It took me three sermons to get through all of these points.

But I thought bringing them all together would just be helpful. A launch point for us. So we're not going to be able to get to the depth of these. But to go over them in such a way that are, I pray, a sweet reminder.

[ 23 : 08 ] Remember your godly calling. Remember your ungodly past. Remember your undeserved rescue. And remember our potential distractions. Four essential reminders in living godly in an ungodly world.

And what's the big deal here? Why remind? Well, look at your first word in the text. Chapter 3, verse 1. Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities. Be obedient. They've already heard this.

This is something that they've learned before. And I know, School of Marsh Baptist Church, you've heard these kinds of things before. I know your leadership. And I praise the Lord for them. Grace Church on 99.

We have been teaching these things. We have been learning them together. And I'm pretty sure as I was listening to Chris Mitchell preach, he said it takes, what, like seven times for something in grains?

I think that's what he said. That's the statistic. So we can never hear these things enough. And this is a command. This is a command from Paul to Titus. You teach the church these things.

[ 24 : 06 ] Help them remember about their salvation and what Christ did so that they can go into a lost world and maximize their influence for the gospel. Remind them.

Remember your godly calling, verse 1. Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.

We must remember that we are called by God to have a godly presence in the world. Not a holier than thou, look at me, I'm so godly.

It is just you live in a manner which says that cannot be done by anything other than a transformed life. Here's how we can say it.

You treat others as if you were actually saved from your sin. Go beyond just to treat others how you want to be treated. Treat others as if you were actually saved from your sin.

[ 25 : 09 ] So what does that mean from this text? Well, you're humble under authority. When you have an opportunity in the many opportunities you have, whether it's in your job, whether it's in your workplace, the schools, children, teens, church, that you show a humility under authority because you recognize that that's how God designed the world.

Just like the centurion to Jesus. I'm a man under authority. I recognize what authority is and how it works. Well, we ought to do that too when we submit to the Lord Jesus Christ.

When we have been changed and transformed, we are now under a new master. We are under the Lord Jesus Christ. We know that God is sovereign and he has authority over his earth and he is Lord over his church and we are his body.

He is the head of the church. So that we are law-abiding earthly citizens because we are law-abiding heavenly citizens. That's just a manner of our life.

We are humble under authority because God puts authority structures in place, whether it's in the home or whether it's at your job, whether it's in our society. Because as you could tell, Crete would probably be very similar to ours.

[ 26 : 32 ] Very individualistic. Very autonomous. Heading towards sovereign citizen mindset. I can do whatever I want and there is nothing anybody can say against it.

In a culture that's in a moral freefall, of course we won't agree with everything that is happening around us. But it is an attitude of humility, recognizing that there's authority structure in the world. And Christians ought to be the first to understand that and to know that and to live by that as we watch our Savior walk on the earth himself. But not only as we remember our godly calling that we know that we're humble under authority, but we're also eagerly unselfish.

We're an unselfish people. Look down at the text. To be ready for every good deed. Ready for every good deed. At a moment's notice, at the drop of a hat, we're ready to go.

Think of how many firefighters over the course of this summer had to be ready. This is a word of preparation. We praise God that their training, their readiness, their preparedness, their courage, their sacrifice, that when the call came, it was, I'm heading into danger.

[ 27 : 56 ] I'm headed towards a fire. I'm putting my life at risk. And maybe some of you are a part of that or have jobs that are like that. In the same way, we are to be unselfish with our time and our resources, what we've been given, to be prepared to show what Christ has done for us in good deeds.

The physical action for a spiritual purpose. Beloved, this is a mindset that we have. That we are ready.

We wake up in the morning. We're at our jobs. That yes, we are focused on the task at hand. We have responsibilities in our home and on our jobs. But how that translates into opportunities to be a spiritual blessing to others through normal physical means, everyday interactions.

Are you ready? If someone were to ask you, why do you live the way that you live? Why do you make those kinds of decisions at your workplaces? Are you ready?

Are you prepared to give an answer for the defense, for the hope that is within you? That's where sound doctrine and sound faith come into discipleship because you are prepared. You've been studying.

[ 29 : 06 ] You've been ready to go with a theological understanding, but also you know how to speak it. In that very Proverbs kind of way, an apple of gold on setting of silver is a word, the right word at the right time.

In the right context, you can be ready for every good work. And in your godly calling, you're called to promote desirable relationships.

Look at verse three. For we, I'm sorry, verse two. To malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.

That when we take what we have been given in the gospel in Jesus Christ, the way that we conduct ourselves in relationships is as far away as we can possibly get to from who we once were because we'll get to that in a moment.

But if it's a culture that is deceptive and deceitful and derelict, that our relationships aren't that way either. To malign means to blaspheme or maybe you've heard slander.

[ 30 : 08 ] We're not taking anyone's character down, but we're called to build up. We are called to be peaceable. Remember, Jesus said, blessed are the peacemakers, ones that bring peace because if Christ's salvation brought peace from the hostility that we had against him, then in our relationships, we're peaceable.

We're gentle. Just like Jesus was gentle and lowly at heart. We're showing every consideration for all men.

We're taking into account how God has created each and every individual person and how we can serve them at their unique and each individual need. That's what's being prepared.

That's the godly presence that we have in the world that he has given to us. But secondly, not only are we to remember that as the body of Christ, as his representatives of taking the gospel to the nations, what helps us in living godly in an ungodly world is that we do remember where we came from.

We do remember our ungodly past. So not only are you to treat others as if you have actually been saved, but we also have to remember that we were the ungodly presence in the world.

[ 31 : 25 ] We were there. We were promoting ungodliness in the same way that the Cretans were, the same way that unsaved Squamish folks are.

Verse 3, for we also once ourselves were foolish. We were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.

We were reckless and naive. We were foolish. And a basic definition for foolishness is living in contrast to the truth. Believing that you are right, but you are absolutely wrong according to God's wisdom, according to God's law.

That's how we lived. That's how I lived. Before the Lord saved my soul, I wanted to get out of my career all that I could.

And the words that I would say in my mind were, no, I'll just, I'll ask the Lord for forgiveness later. I'll repent at the end of my life because I grew up in a church just like this one, a faithful Baptist church that taught me the gospel.

[ 32 : 42 ] I thought I could just live my life and repent later. Right at the 11th hour, just get in by the skin of my teeth. That's foolish. Thinking that you are living in a way that is right, but it is in contrast to the truth.

We were willfully lawless, being disobedient and deceived. We believe that the way that we were living was actually going to turn out for our best. We believe that our sin would fully satisfy us. We believe that the way that we were going and our desires were the way for life, but it was actually a way of death. Verse 3, they enslaved us. It was enslaving.

We were kept down. We would actually be selfish in what we wanted, in our desires, in what we were seeking, and these were our driving ambitions for our life.

And we thought we were free. We thought we had it all. We thought we were truly living. But the Bible's definition, we were enslaved.

[ 33 : 56 ] We were encapsulated. We were trapped. We were dominated by what we actually loved. That's what sin does. It lies to you. It says, what you are doing is right, and it will give life, but it is actually the taste of death.

It's enslavement. It's entrapping. So this is critical for our understanding as we go out into the world and as we labor together for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

For us to have a humble understanding of who we were because they are enslaved. They are trapped. They have no way out. They're reckless and naive. They're selfish. They're dead in their sin.

They have no way out. There's nothing they can do either. And sometimes, again, I understand the temptation is to judge by the depth of the sin.

Can we just kind of wipe that from our minds and understand the depths of Christ's mercy and salvation? Yes, some of it is blatantly foolish and very difficult.

[ 35 : 06 ] so much so that we shield our eyes sometimes. But God's mercy can save the reckless, the naive, the selfish, the hateful, the hating because we were there.

It was us. Because as we get to our third point, to live godly in an ungodly world, we don't just remember that we are the godly presence in the world, but also remember that we were the ungodly presence in the world.

Remember our ungodly past, but we have to remember our undeserved rescue. We have to remember our undeserved rescue. Verse 4, That's what happened.

Remember these three words. He saved us. Remember how Old Testament Israel was consistently told, Remember the Exodus.

Remember how you were enslaved in Egypt. Remember how you were brought out and you were brought to me. And now in the New Testament, the New Covenant Church, we're brought to the

Lord's table to remember the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 36 : 47 ] Remember your rescue. Remember what you were saved from. Verses 3. Remember that. Remember that God personally intervened into your life when the kindness of God, our Savior, and his love for mankind appeared.

What did I miss? But, verse 4, that was in contrast to how you were living and who you were and what you were worthy of in verse 3.

It was when all of that was taking place. In the middle of it. That's when the kindness of God appeared. He personally intervened.

When someone comes into your life, you usually want to know why they've intervened in such a way and you're probably going to get that the more that we practice this. Why did you do that? Because God was so kind to me in Christ my Savior and his love for mankind.

This is where we get the word philanthropy from. Where your desire for the human race goes beyond your own selfish needs but you want to provide something for them.

[ 38 : 06 ] The heart of God was revealed when he personally intervened in your life. When all hope seemed to be lost, his kind, benevolent expression of his character came out in his love for you.

This word appeared is just to bring to light. It came into reality. That when you remember your rescue, when you're seeking to live in a godly way, when all else is godless around you, you can remember how he personally intervened in your life and was kind to you.

He was kind. He revealed what you needed in that moment. There was desperation. There was darkness. There was despair. There was rebellion. There was wickedness.

There was judgment. And people sometimes ask, maybe all the time, where is God? Where is he going to show up? And part of that is you and I as the church going into the lost world, showing up, being ready for every good deed.

God has this very distinct habit of rescuing. Have you noticed that? When we think all is lost, when we think that there is no hope, God has this very distinct timing of coming in at that moment.

[ 39 : 28 ] He did for you and he did for I. And the work of God was accomplished. It was accomplished in verse 5. He saved us. He did the work.

He saved us. You were rescued. That's what being saved means. You were rescued. You were taken out of something that was going to destroy you. Something that was going to cause destruction.

You were saved out of it. Not because you did anything. Not because of your deeds. Not because of your works. Not because you came to church this morning.

Not because you grew up in a Christian home. The only thing you contributed was your sin. You contributed your judgment. But he, God, saved us.

Notice the pattern. God saved you. God saved us. It wasn't our works.

[ 40 : 32 ] There was no level attained. There was no certain evaluation that he gave. Access to God didn't come through human successes or actions.

God is holy. We were dead in our trespasses and sins. But, again, look down at the text.

Verse 5. According to his mercy. It was his mercy. Mercy means withholding something that we deserve.

We deserved all that Christ God on the cross. We deserved all of that. We deserved eternity without him.

Separated from him. But mercy, expressing a need, a concern, because of a desperate need, showing pity, mercy is withholding something that we do deserve.

[ 41 : 39 ] And on the flip side of that, grace is then inserting what we don't deserve. Mercy is withholding something that we do deserve, but grace is giving what we don't deserve.

It fills in the gaps. He was merciful. He gave us all of heaven. And Paul says in Ephesians, every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places is in Christ Jesus.

He didn't withhold anything because of his mercy. He changed us.

His righteous act, his good work, he applied his perfectly godly life and his body and his blood and his atoning work on the cross to our account.

We need to remember our rescue because he totally changed us. He totally transformed us.

[ 42 : 40 ] Look down at the text again. Not just mercy by withholding something, but washing us and renewing us, regenerating us by the Holy Spirit. He totally changed the inside so that we can now act on the outside differently.

He made us new, made us something we can never make on our own, only something that he could, so he gave us the third person of the Trinity. He didn't say, okay, you're saved, now you just go do your best.

He said, I'm going to supply everything you need so that you can live godly in an ungodly culture and world so that you can maximize your influence with the gospel within the context of the local church.

We can do that by the power of the Holy Spirit. He totally transformed us from the inside. He made us new. We are new creations. We are new creatures in him.

All of this brings about the change and the new desires. So, not being foolish, disobedient, deceived, we are now seeking to be wise and humble under authority, not enslaved to various lusts and pleasures.

[ 43 : 54 ] We are being ready for every good deed, not being hateful and hating one another. We are actually being peaceful and gentle, showing consideration for all men because the Holy Spirit empowers us to do that by his grace.

But we must remember our rescue, remember our salvation. All of that gets to adorn the gospel. When we remember the understanding of the gospel, which is our doctrine, and then we seek to live that out, which is our discipleship, we get to show off Christ.

Isn't that amazing? What a privilege, what a joy. And of course, a student is not greater than its master, right? So, it's going to come with suffering, it's going to come with rejection, it's going to come with resistance.

All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution, Paul tells Timothy. So, we need to be realistic about it. But that's where our joy comes from.

[ 44 : 59 ] When we remember our rescue, we see what Christ did for us and then we go out into the world and we're ready for every good deed and we get to show a transformed life by the power of the Holy Spirit. We can't take any credit for it.

And we get to show the world what Christ has done in us. We cannot save others. We can't regenerate them. We can't grant them life. We can't justify them.

We can't put them in a right standing before God by his grace because that's where God came in. You were given mercy. You couldn't do anything for your salvation.

So, we withheld wrath and judgment but then he inserted a right standing, a right position by his grace which is justification. You can now stand before God in the right position, holy and redeemed. We can't do any of that. But we can adorn the gospel. But we can make it look like it is the worthiness of Christ that changed our life.

[ 46 : 04 ] He was so generous. He poured all of this richly on us, verse 6, through Christ our Savior. He poured it out.

He gave it all richly. So, when we're a godly presence in the world and we remember how we were ungodly, let's not be stingy.

He poured out richly. He gave us everything that we need. When we're ready for every good work, let us exemplify our Lord Jesus Christ who gave us all of our needs and then some, every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

Let's give richly in the same way we were given richly in Christ Jesus. Because we've been given hope. We have nothing on this earth that we can take with us into glory.

He granted us mercy. He gave us justification so that we would have hope of eternal life by being made heirs of Jesus Christ.

[ 47 : 16 ] We have what he has. That's what being an heir is. We have what Christ has. Is he worried about any of the earthly things in this life?

Or is he seated on the right hand of God right now? Ready to come back. Ready to restore. We have heirs to all of that.

That's what we have. We have hope of eternal life and so let us be very mindful of the ways that we can cling to the earthly things. Cling to the things that we can't take with us.

Yet we have ultimately eternal life in Christ. The eternal things. So that we move on to verse 8.

Time is running short, I know.

So that we as church leadership, so Paul, go into Titus, you speak confidently these things for those who have believed God and will be carefully engaged in good deeds.

[ 48 : 20 ] That's the charge. If you've believed God, you do these things. You remind yourself that you are a godly presence in the world, that you were once an ungodly presence, and that you remember your rescue so that you will be careful, you will be thoughtful, you will be ready to engage in good deeds because these are going to be good and profitable for men.

So that your good deeds will be seen by men, and then what? Glorify your father in heaven. They will glorify your father who is in heaven. But lastly, real quick, remember some potential distractions. There's a couple of distractions that we might have. Look at verse 9. Avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. Reject a factious man after the first and second warning, knowing that such a man is perverted and sinning and being self-condemned. We can be worried about the wrong things, so much so that we bring strife into the church.

That we can be a distraction in the midst of our relationships in the church. That our actions are being watched by a lost world.

[ 49 : 32 ] Let us not be the people that the world or Squamish can say, I thought they were Christians. Aren't you supposed to be a Christian? Christian. And I know there might be times that you're rightfully labeled that because you're standing for truth.

That's not what we're talking about here. That we can avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, strife, and disputes about the law. We can even take God's eternal and enduring word and make it a distraction.

Because we're not going to it for the right reasons or the right things. We're making it selfish. We're making it about us. We're not all going to have the exact same nuances of doctrine.

And what we believe about certain things. We understand that in the church. But once we start making it a point of contention where the church gets distracted from its ultimate priority, we're going to be held accountable for that.

We love the truth. We, Church on 99, Squamish Baptist Church, you have leaders that love the truth and love nothing more than to promote the truth, guard the truth, protect the truth.

[ 50 : 48 ] But we as a church body, all of us together, we can get so ingrained with controversies and things about the word of God that are actually distracting us. That doesn't mean we don't go deep.

It doesn't mean we don't be faithful. It doesn't mean we don't study. It means as we grow, we're not making that the distraction that we are building up.

We're encouraging one another because we still have to go out. We have the opportunity, beloved, to be an adornment to the gospel, to show off Christ.

I don't think any of you around Christmas time just throws up a tree and says, yeah, that's a Christmas tree. No, you adorn it. You beautify it. You put certain things around it that are unique and encouraging.

None of you came in your pajamas today at church, probably. I don't think so anyways. You adorned yourself. You put something on to help out what happens in the morning sometimes.

[ 51 : 50 ] And you brides, when you walk down the aisle, you just didn't wear t-shirt and jeans. You adorned yourself. You put something on to show off for your husband, your spouse.

It's good. God, as we are in the church, we have the opportunity to be healthy, to mature, and to grow as fellow churches, brothers and sisters in Christ who love one another dearly.

As we embark on this fall opportunity, as we go into this season of life, these four reminders that we're going into an ungodly world so that we can live godly.

None of this guarantees a result. Let's trust God in that. But what will happen is it will be faithful, encouraging, it will glorify our Father who is in heaven, and it will maximize the influence for the sake of the gospel together.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for this time. Thank you for your word and your instruction. Father, I pray that you would be with Squamish Baptist Church, Grace Church of 99, The Rock, the fellow churches that we know in town, that we will seek to adorn the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 53 : 20 ] We will strive for sound doctrine, good understanding of theological beliefs from your word, but we won't stop there. That we will continue to grow, that we will continue to live in such a manner that honors and glorifies you.

That when the world needs an example of what it means to be faithful brothers and sisters in Christ, as we strive to grow together, that they can look to Squamish. They can look to these believers.

