

Adorning The Doctrine

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- [0 : 00] Please open your Bibles this morning to the book of Titus. The book of Titus. If you're a visitor, a guest with us this morning, we have been walking together through the book of Titus.
- We've made our way this morning to chapter 2, and we're going to be in verses 1 through 10. If you're using the pew Bibles there in front of you or behind you, you can find that on page 938.
- You might remember that we've titled this sermon series A Church of Sound Doctrine. A Church of Sound Doctrine. That's what we, by God's grace, hope and pray and aim to be.
- And in chapter 2, verses 1 through 10, we get a look at exactly what that might look like practically for us. So Bibles open, Titus chapter 2, verses 1 through 10.
- Follow along with me as I read the Word of God. Paul says, But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.
- [1 : 02] Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith and love and steadfastness. Older women, likewise, are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine.
- They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind and submissive to their own husbands, that the Word of God may not be reviled.
- Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.
- Bond servants are to be submissive to their own masters in everything. They are to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing all good faith, so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God, our Savior.
- Let's pray. Lord, again, we pray that we would look like this. This is a work of your grace, of your doing, and this is impossible for us in the flesh, and so we pray that the things that we just read, that the things that we hear described in Titus, would move from knowing to being in our lives together, that we would look like this.
- [2 : 38] And we pray and we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, if you are a fan of energy drinks, or have watched television, commercials, or even walked into a gas station over the past several years, you are probably familiar with Red Bull.
- And you are probably familiar with its slogan, Red Bull. Help me. It gives you wings. At least that is what they say.
- The popular energy drink has built a reputation around that slogan, and the commercials typically, they feature somebody who is down in the dumps, having a hard moment, a hard day, sad, depressed.

Then they get a sip of Red Bull energy drink, out of their back sprouts wings, and up they go, flying away to a better life. Well, this slogan that has drawn so much attention, you may not know this, it was also the basis of a class action lawsuit in 2014.

Consumers filed a lawsuit stating that the company had falsely advertised. Despite what they may have claimed, Red Bull does not, in fact, actually give you wings.

[3 : 56] One consumer, Mr. Corathers, he was quoted saying he drank Red Bull for 10 years, but that he had not once developed wings, or shown any improvement either intellectually or physically, and we can't argue with that, can we?

As ridiculous as that sounds, Red Bull ultimately agreed to pay off up to \$13 million to settle the lawsuit and to move on.

The lesson? False advertising is costly. If you're going to claim something, promote something about yourself, say something about who you are, you had better make sure that the product matches the advertisement.

That's exactly what Paul is saying here to Titus. Not about Red Bull, of course, but about the church. See, false teachers have crept in to these newly forming churches in Crete, and they're leading men and women to claim to be Christian, yet live like a Cretan.

And so Paul says, no, this type of false advertising, false professing, false teaching, that is costly. It discredits our profession. It damages our witness to the outside world, and at worst, it distracts from the glory of God.

[5 : 24] So Paul tells Titus, Titus, you teach what accords with sound doctrine. You teach that faith accords with godliness.

You establish elders who will hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught. Titus, you teach them there in Crete that to say you are a Christian advertises something about yourself.

It says, I have been redeemed. I once was lost, dead in my sin, hellbound because of my own rebellion against God, but God, by his grace, has rescued me, and he has saved me, but not only that, he has changed me.

He has transformed me from the inside out. So now my heart is transformed. I'm not the same as what I once was. I am a product of the redeeming grace of God.

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has gone, the new has come. To say you are a Christian is to say that type of new heart transformation has happened right here.

[6 : 32] Well, here in the year 2022, not much has changed, has it? There are many who, like the Cretans, profess to know God, but deny him by their works.

These verses here in chapter 2, verses 1 through 10, they are a reminder for us that gospel believing leads to gospel living. Gospel believing ought to lead to godly living.

So this morning, what we're going to see is four facts about godly living. Four facts about godly living in these verses. This is going to be our outline this morning. If you're a note taker, like to take notes to follow along, I encourage you to do that.

You're going to find four facts for godly living this morning. First, godly living accords with gospel believing. Godly living accords with gospel believing.

Some of you are musical, and so this will make sense to you, but even if you're not, most of you have decent enough ears to where you may not be able to say exactly what's wrong, but when you hear something off, you can tell, hey, that doesn't sound quite right.

[7 : 48] A wrong note was hit, a wrong chord was struck, something's off here, musically. A chord, musically speaking, is when three or more notes work together.

They play nice together. They harmonize together. They sound good together. And interestingly, the French word for accord that you play musically is accord.

You may not know that. That's the idea here. One thing aligns with something else. It accords with something else. They're in harmony. They go together. They make music. They play nice.

And on the other side of that is discord. Discord is a lack of harmony. And you may not recognize that term, but you know, again, you know what it sounds like.

It sounds bad. You can hear something is off. That sounds terrible. One person's playing one thing. One person's singing another thing. And it just makes you want to close up your ears because it sounds awful.

[8 : 48] And what we saw last week, Paul said, the behavior of these false teachers was not in accord with what they professed.

You remember what he said. Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons. They profess to know God with their mouths, but they deny him with their work.

Something's off. They say they believe, but they don't live like they believe. So Paul says here in chapter 2, verse 1, he says, but as for you, Titus, see there's a difference here.

Yes, there are false teachers saying the opposite, but as for you, Titus, you are to be distinct. You are to teach the church to be distinct. Teach what accords with sound doctrine.

You see that, right? He does not just say, teach sound doctrine. As valuable as that is, he's told us that earlier. Sound doctrine, incredibly valuable.

[9 : 49] That's the beginning. That's where it starts. He does not say, teach sound doctrine. What does he say? Teach what accords with sound doctrine. Don't just teach the information.

He says, teach the life transformation that goes in harmony with the right information. The sound living that works in harmony with sound doctrine.

Teach that godly living accords with gospel believing. Now, this is a warning for us, church. This is a warning for us that it is not enough to know the right information.

It is not enough. You see, the problem here in Crete, it was not the pagans. It was not the outside world. It was not those who would never step foot into a church.

The problem here in Crete, it was church people. It was people who know the right answers. They sat through the sermons. They read their Bibles. They would say, I know God.

[10 : 53] I believe in Jesus. I profess to be a Christian. But they denied him with their works. Their lives were in tension with their profession. Do not buy the lie, church.

Do not buy the lie that you can have God and live however you want. It's not true. Do not buy the lie that your actions, your life, your behavior doesn't matter.

So long as you come to church, pray your prayers, say that you believe, so long as you're not as far off as this person or that person. These are all lies of the enemy.

If you have been given the gift of salvation, then you have been given the gift of sanctification. They are a package deal. You can't separate them. You cannot have one without the other.

You can go to church your whole life. You can know the whole Bible inside out. You can know all the right facts and still not know God. Now all of us in Christ are growing.

[12 : 04] We are progressing. None of us are perfect. We are striving by His grace to put sin to death and to pursue holiness. But friend, if there is no godliness, no transformation, if there is no growth in your life, no distinction between you and the world around you, it is right for you to ask whether you know God or just know about Him.

See, this is a warning for us. Church, knowing about God saves no one. Knowing God truly, personally, through faith in Jesus Christ, knowing God is the only hope for sinners like me and like you.

And you cannot know Him and remain unchanged. That's what Paul is telling us here. Amanda and I, we celebrated 10 years of marriage the other day.

10 years. It's hard to believe that it's already been 10 years. We've known each other for about 14 years. And we started dating about two years before that. So all in all, about 12 years of actually being together.

together. And that's a lot of time with one person. A lot of time. It's a good time. Okay? And we were talking the other day at dinner.

[13 : 31] You have to ask her her opinion on that. But for me, for me, it's been a good time. We were talking the other day about the fact that we are different people than when we first met.

We are different people than when we started dating. And we're different people than when we first got married. And I hope she would praise God for that. But how could you not be different?

Spending so much time with one person, engaging with one person, how could you get to know someone personally at that level for 14 years and not be different?

Well, Paul says, if you know God, you will be different. If you spend time with Him, Paul says, you will be changed. Maybe not instantly, some dramatic, life-changing change suddenly, all of a sudden, but gradually, over time, with prayer and patience and pursuit, you will be changed.

You will become like Him. You will become godly, godly living accords with gospel believing. Well, what does that look like?

[14 : 42] What does that look like? Paul shows us throughout the rest of this passage, what godliness looks like for every believer. And this is our second point this morning. Godliness is for every believer.

Godly living is for every believer. These descriptions in this passage, they're not exhaustive. This is not all that we need to know. But Paul gives us an overview here of what godliness should look like for every member of the church in verses 2 through 10.

Every member. There's something here for all of us. And Paul speaks, I think, to three distinct categories here. Three distinct categories. He speaks to men, women, and workers.

Follow along with me here. He speaks to men, women, and workers. Well, first, he speaks to the men. He speaks to the old men and to the young men.

Look here with me to verse 2. Titus 2, verse 2. He says, Older men, you are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.

[15 : 52] And the order here, I think, is important. Older men, older Christian men are to lead the way as examples of godliness in the church. He says, they should be sober-minded.

He says, they're under control. Their thoughts aren't clouded by anger, or by sensuality, or by greed. They are not easily deceived or led astray.

These older Christian men are rocks in the home, and in the church, and in society. He says, they are respectable, dignified, able to control themselves.

But not only that, look here. Look at this. Paul says, they are to be sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. Think about that.

Sound in faith, and love, and steadfastness. You know, that word sound has come up before, hasn't it? And we keep hearing that. An elder must be able to give instruction in sound doctrine.

[16 : 51] Paul says, as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. We've titled this series in Titus, A Church of Sound Doctrine. What that word means is healthy.

Healthy. These men, these older men, are to be spiritually, morally healthy, in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.

Do you see the picture of godliness that he's laying out for us here, men? These men know the word. They know the faith.

They know what they believe and why. They could pick out a lie because they know, well, God's word doesn't say that. These men are healthy in love. They love God and they love their neighbor.

But not only that, it says these are faithful men. Reliable. Steadfast. They're enduring men. Do you want to be a man of God?

[17 : 51] Know your Bible. Know your Bible. Love God with all your heart. Love God with all your mind. Love God with all your soul. And love your neighbor as yourself.

And stick around a while, men. You want to be a godly man? Be faithful. Don't be a wishy-washy man. Be stable. Be reliable. Be someone that others can depend on and know that what they get from you is rooted, not just in duty, but in delight in the Lord.

That is godly manhood. I pray for a church full of men like this. Are you pursuing that, men?

He not only speaks to the older men, he also speaks directly to young men here in verse 6. Verse 6. He says, the young men just have one job here in verse 6.

And probably because mastering this will take all of your attention. So young men, listen with me. Young men, you are to be self-controlled. Self-controlled.

[18 : 59] We've got to get this right before we can move on to anything else. The fruit of the Spirit is what? It's love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and what?

Self-control. One of the first verses that I memorized as a young Christian, it was Proverbs 25, 28. It says this. It says, a man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.

I'll say that again. A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls. What happens to a city without walls? It is open to attack.

It has no defense. Anyone can come and go as they please, take what they want, do what they want. And Paul says, without self-control, men, we are open to all sorts of attack.

A lack of self-control, young men, is at the root of a thousand sins. But a young man with self-control, he has his defenses up.

[20 : 03] He's prepared for attack when it comes, and it will come. Does your speech demonstrate self-control? Do you show self-control by the way you use your time?

And the way you engage with your family at home? When you go to work, when you're with your friends, do you act in self-control? With your temptations, men, do we demonstrate self-control?

You know, the greater the access to temptation, the greater our need for self-control is. I'll tell you something, we have greater access to temptation now than any time ever before. We better get some self-control, men.

Are your defenses up? Second, he speaks here to the women, and just like with the men, he speaks to both older women and to younger women.

And listen, I will not tell you which category you belong in. I'm not going to do that. I'm just going to say he speaks to both here. Some of you ladies prefer to identify as a younger woman. Fair enough.

[21 : 10] Look to verse 3. He says, older women likewise, just like the men, are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not slaves to much wine.

And they are to teach what is good and so train the younger women. And I think you can see the influence of the Cretans here in Paul's instructions. It was normal in Crete to slander.

Remember, Cretans are liars. It was normal to be a slave to food and drink. Remember, they're evil beasts, lazy glutton. But Paul says, Christian woman, you be distinct.

Christian woman, you let your speech be seasoned with salt. Only speaking what is good for building up. Only speaking the truth in love. Christian woman, exercise self-control with food and with drink.

Don't be a slave. Don't get drunk with wine, but be filled with the Holy Spirit. Be reverent in your behavior. Does this describe you? See, we don't age out of pursuing godliness.

[22 : 18] I served at a church in North Myrtle Beach. We have a few visitors this morning that came from North Myrtle Beach to come and join us this morning. They're gluttons for punishment here. But the mentality in that community is I'm retired.

It's a retirement area. I'm retired. I've earned the right to check out and do what I want. Live as I please. I came to the beach to check out and to live the rest of my days in beach and sunshine and sand.

Paul says, older women, you don't ever age out of godliness. You don't ever retire from godliness. You still have big responsibility even in your old age.

Great responsibility. You still have work to do. If you're looking for a way to serve the church, if you, older women are looking for a way to make meaningful contributions to the life of this church, Paul gives you two ways right here.

Do you see it? Live a life worth imitating and pass it on. If you want to serve this church, live a life worth imitating and pass it on.

[23 : 24] Look again what he says in verse 3. He says, these older women are to teach what is good and so train the younger women. So younger women, this is for you now.

He says, train the younger women to love their husbands and children and to be self-controlled. There's that word again. Pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands.

Most of the focus here for the young woman seems to be on their sphere of influence and service in the home. I don't believe that that means they can't work outside of the home, but it does mean that this is primary.

And again, it seems like the influence in Crete, the influence of the Cretans was toward a kind of laziness or indifference in the home. And so Paul says, young women, young Christian women, be distinct, be diligent.

Pursue love for your husbands. That is hard sometimes, I know. Pursue it. Pursue love for your children. It is easy to be a half-hearted spouse.

[24 : 35] It is easy to be a half-hearted, lazy parent. I'm speaking as a father. It is easy to be a half-hearted parent. It's much easier to let the television disciple your kids than it is for you to take the time and the energy to train up your children.

It's much easier to avoid discipline for your children than it is to enforce discipline and godliness in the homes. Paul says, work hard in the home, young women, for the glory of God.

But not only that, third category here. He also speaks to workers. I want us to see that Paul is crossing every box here.

Checking off every box. Young, old, men, women, and now he addresses Titus, who is a pastor, an organizer of the church. He's a teacher. He's a servant of God and slaves Titus.

You see that? The distinction here. Godly living is for everyone in the church. Paul says, verse 7, you, Titus, he's speaking to Titus, verse 7, you show yourself in all respects to be a model of good work.

[25 : 44] Show integrity in your teaching. Show dignity. Show sound speech that cannot be condemned. Don't give anyone an opportunity to mock God by what you say or by how you live.

Your life matters, Titus. Your godliness matters. Your speech matters. And we say, of course it does. He's a pastor. Everybody's looking at him. He's a public representative of God Almighty.

Everybody's looking at the way he lives. But then he goes to the lowest rung of the social totem pole and says the same thing to the slaves. Just consider the dignity that he's giving them right now.

He says to some of the lowest members of society here, your actions, your behavior, your attitude matters. You think nobody's looking at how you live?

Think again. You think that your actions, because you're not an older man, you're not a leader in the church, you're not wealthy, you're not well respected, that godliness doesn't matter for you? Think again.

[26 : 47] He says, your godliness matters. Your speech matters. Your actions, even as a slave, adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

Church, no one is exempt. No one is exempt. Godliness is for all of us. There's no distinction here. Male, female, young, old, black, white, rich, poor, white collar, blue collar, whatever your job, whatever your role, no one is excluded.

We share in one sanctifying spirit of God. So godliness is for you. But how will we get there?

How will we become a church that looks like this? Third, godly living requires training. Our third point this morning, godly living requires training.

You cannot do this on your own. Church, you cannot do this on your own. Anyone who's ever done any exercise training, understands this?

[28 : 02] Breeze and Linda did not pay me to say this, okay? Just a disclaimer. There is a limit to how much you can accomplish by yourself. You can only push yourself so far. There's a benefit to having training from someone who knows what they're talking about, who has done the move before, who can show you where you're making mistakes, give you feedback along the way, push you to where you need to go.

You can lift more, do more, and avoid getting hurt along the way if you have good training to help you get to your goal. It's the same with our pursuit of godliness, church.

You cannot do this by yourself. We're just, we're so independent. We don't want anybody else in our business. We think we can do it ourselves.

We think we got this under control. We don't want anybody to, nobody needs to judge me. Nobody needs to tell me how to live my life. I don't need help. You want to know another lie of the enemy that we tend to believe?

It's that we got this. We got this. I don't need anybody's help. I got this. Church, that is a lie, and we've bought it. The way we will grow up in godliness is to love each other enough to say, let's do this together.

[29 : 21] The way that you will grow up in godliness is by linking arms with everybody else around you in this place, your brothers and sisters in this church, to say we are pursuing this together as a family.

That's what Paul says. Older women, verse 4, look there, again, verse 4, are to what? Train the younger women. They won't get there on their own.

They need your wisdom, older woman. Have you learned anything about what it means to be a godly spouse, to honor God as a wife, as a mother, as a woman? Share it.

Train them up. They need your help. Younger men, likewise, verse 6, they need to be, what? Urged to be self-controlled. He doesn't just say, be self-controlled.

He says, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. Who's doing the urging? It's us, church. Older men, where are you? Where are you?

[30 : 23] Urge the younger men to be self-controlled. Show them with your lives and urge them with your words to live in godliness. Get in one another's business.

We can't do it by ourselves. And young men, young women, humble yourself to listen, to receive words of wisdom, godly input from those who have developed godly character.

You know, the devil loves our privacy. privacy. The devil loves our love affair with privacy. We need one another. Personal holiness is a group project, church.

Who here is committed to pray for you? Who here knows your sins, specifically? Who here has committed to follow up with you?

Who here is walking with you in the word? Who here is helping you root your life in the word? Helping you to live what you profess to believe? That's what discipleship is. And we've been talking a lot about discipleship.

[31 : 28] It's very simple. It's helping one another pursue God. Are we doing that, church? And if you're struggling in any way to pursue godliness, and we all do, if you're struggling in any way with pursuing godliness, ask yourself, have I ever been trained?

Or am I trying to do this on my own? Am I being trained now? And if not, what will I do about it? You know, Treg and I would love nothing more than to connect you with someone.

Maybe that's us. That's great. But to connect you with someone or a group of someone who would be committed to making this happen in your life. Ephesians 4, 11 through 16.

We're going to wear out this passage in this place. It says this, He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, that's the pastors, to equip the saints for the work of ministry.

That's our role. The role of pastors is to equip you, the saints, for the work of ministry. Well, what's that? For building up the body of Christ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God.

[32 : 42] to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. So that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro by the waves and carried around by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness and deceitful schemes, by lies and false teachers like here in Crete.

Rather, how are we going to get there? What's the key to this ministry? Rather, speaking the truth in love. Older men speaking the truth in love.

Older women speaking the truth in love. Young men, young women, workers of every kind speaking the truth in love. We are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped.

When each part is working properly, it makes itself grow. So that it builds itself up in love. Church, there's no other way.

Godliness requires training. But why? Why does it matter? What's behind all of this pursuit of godliness?

[34 : 04] Why does it matter ultimately how I choose to live my life? This is our final point this morning. Number four. It's because godly living adorns the doctrine of God.

Fourth and finally, godly living adorns the doctrine of God. All of this talk of godliness, of pursuing godliness, of godly living, of the expectation that Christians should live godly lives.

Please don't get the wrong idea. Please don't mix up the order here. This can be incredibly dangerous if the order is mixed up here. We are not saved by our works.

We are not saved by our works. we are saved by the grace of God. Undeserved, unmerited, it is a free gift without any view towards our goodness.

What did we just, what did I just read about justification earlier? It's not our works. It's the work of Christ. We have no goodness in ourself. Any goodness that comes from us, any ability to do any good work comes from the grace of God.

[35 : 24] It is, if anyone is saved, it's through faith in Christ Jesus alone. His perfection, His goodness, His perfect obedience, credited to our bankrupt account through faith.

For our sake, He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. But don't stop there.

That's not the end for us, Christian. We were saved for good works. Unto good works, which He prepared beforehand for us, that we should walk in them.

And that fruit of godliness in our life bears witness to the fact that we have been redeemed from our sinful ways, delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred into the kingdom of His beloved Son in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Our godliness bears witness to the goodness of God and the beauty of the gospel. That's what it means to adorn the doctrine of God. Church. Our godly living, it lifts up His beauty.

[36 : 46] It's meant to function like beautiful decorations or like a piece of jewelry that catches your eye and it draws your attention. Your life, Christian, your godliness is meant to draw attention to the worth and beauty of the gospel.

It's meant to draw attention to the worth and the beauty of God. And we see that throughout the passage, don't we? This is the purpose of our godliness is that God might receive glory in us.

Why does He give commands here for young women? Verse 5. Look there. Verse 5. That the word of God may not be reviled. That it wouldn't be mocked or disdained that our behavior would give no reason for anyone to mock the goodness of God.

Why does He give commands for Titus for his speech and for his actions to be above reproach? Verse 8. So that an opportunity, so that an opponent may not be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

And why are even slaves called to live in a way that is honoring to God? Verse 10. That in everything they might adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

[38 : 03] I remember when I bought Amanda's engagement ring. I had never bought something so valuable in my life.

And I went several times to the jewelry store back and forth to get the right ring and to check it out, to inspect it. And then I bought the ring and now I had something incredibly valuable in my possession.

And I had to protect it at all costs. So immediately I put it in its case. Shut it. There was a couple weeks there in between when I bought the ring and when it found its way onto Amanda's finger.

And the ring just sat in the box in my room. And every now and then I would come back to my apartment from class or from whatever I was doing and I would just go to the box and I would open it.

Just take a peek. Get a look at it, make sure it's still there. Then back in the box and tucked away in its place. See, that box served two purposes.

[39 : 13] One, it protected the ring. It's valuable. It guarded it. It secured it. It protected it. It kept it from harm. Nobody was going to smush it or step on it.

It was safe in the box. And two, when opened up, it showcased the beauty of the ring. The point's not the box. The point is what it is drawing attention to.

The beauty of the ring. Church, there is nothing more beautiful or valuable or precious or worth guarding or worth drawing attention to than the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The good news that the perfect son of God has come. He has lived perfectly where we couldn't. He has died in our place on our behalf.

He has risen from the grave and he offers his perfect righteousness to any who would come to him in faith. That's beautiful. Our lives, our godliness defends that gospel from attack, from mockery, from disdain, from hatred.

[40 : 28] And when we live lives that are worthy of the gospel of God, it draws attention to his beauty. It brings God the praise that he intends to get from us.

shines a spotlight on the beauty of the doctrine of God our Savior to say, look what God has done. My life is proof of the goodness of God and his power to save.

May God be pleased to do that in you and to do that here with us. Let's pray. not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name be glory for the sake of your steadfast love and your faithfulness.

Lord, we have no good apart from you. We have no goodness in ourselves. None is good but God alone. But God, you are pleased to take wrecked sinners not because we're good but because you are merciful.

You are pleased to take ruined sinners and to purify and sanctify us through the blood of Christ and then to make us shine like lights in the midst of darkness in this present evil age.

[41 : 51] Lord, so we pray, Father, that we would be distinct not for us but for the glory of your name. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.