

# He Saved Us - Part 2 of 2

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Titus chapter number 3, I find myself just talking and crying every Sunday here lately, and that doesn't help. Songs like that by those four doesn't help me move away from that.

Just so grateful for what he's done. He sought us and he saved us. Before we jump back into this passage, I'd like to open it off with a question. Have you ever been so dirty in life you didn't think you would ever get clean, or maybe your kitchen was that way this week, you just thought, I might as well rebuild.

It is just not going to come clean. Have you ever been in that situation? Josh, Chris, and I were helping yesterday in a bathroom, and when you're working in a bathroom, there's a time where you open up, if you're replacing a toilet in the bathroom, you open up this wax ring.

That's hard for me there, all right? And you open it up, and even when it's clean, just touching it is one of the grossest things in all of the world. And I told him, I said, I know my story for tomorrow, Josh.

But it wasn't the one I was thinking of. Kevin Hall, Chase and Tyler's uncle, works in South Africa. You know, we support as a missionary. We were college roommates, and we went into a cave, and spelunking is what you do if you have equipment.

[ 1 : 1 3 ] We were just crawling into a hole is what we were doing. And we found this cave, and it was so cool, and there was this little passageway, and I was like the only one small enough who thought they could get through it, all right?

So I wiggled myself in there really good, all right? And I wiggled and wiggled, and then I was just out of energy. And so I was just stuck there in this tunnel, just laying sideways with no more energy to move, and I felt like I was just wedged in there.

And I said, Kevin, I'm going to need some help. And of course, he's like, I got to go. Somebody, you know, just, he left me there for a little bit, and I'm thinking, oh, man, this is how it's all going to end.

I've crawled into my own tomb, and I'm going to be here. And so after I convinced him, I said, Kevin, I'm not going to be able to get out of here unless you help me. And so I hear them, like, giggling behind me, and that's what he did, Kevin giggles, all right?

And I heard a couple of them laughing. The next thing you know, they had my feet, and they just jerked me out of this thing, and dirt went into my nose, and just, I was covered from head to toe in mud, and I smelt it for, like, weeks.

[ 2 : 1 9 ] I could not get it out of my system. And that's literally the dirtiest, I believe, that I'd ever been in life. It was that time that I got stuck in that cave. And so maybe you consider some times that are comical, but there's a type of uncleanness that those of you that read through the Bible, you see that gets taught to us in Scripture, and such a vivid example.

Next week, we may talk about some vessels, and the Bible is speaking about those. But this week, I want to point your attention as we start today to the story of lepers in the Bible.

Leprosy, an uncleanness that wasn't comical. It's one that would just change. A horrific skin disease. It gets described for us in Numbers chapter number 12.

It eats away at the flesh. It's these painful, open wounds that cover your body completely, and because of the sores and the oozing, it hardens and dies and falls off, and then it continues.

And for the Israelites, it was a sickness. It was more than a sickness. It brought just abject humiliation. You were not allowed to be with your family on Thanksgiving. You were not allowed to live inside of the walls here.

[ 3 : 28 ] If you became a leper, you lost everything. Reputation, your job, your family, your friends, any of that warm fellowship that we would have. And they would have looked so disheveled that when you saw them, you should have known a person was coming that had leprosy.

But if you didn't, they had to let you know. Unclean, unclean. They had to proclaim their disease. They had to call themselves unclean. They lived in quarantine outside of the city or town or civilization there.

And not merely for just a couple weeks, but sometimes for the rest of their days, they would live as unclean and as untouchables among the people. And while Jesus is preaching in Galilee, in Mark chapter number 1, verse 40, he meets a leper.

And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, kneeling down to him and saying unto him, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. The one that had always had to cry out unclean, unclean, he cries out from a distance.

You see his faith. He heard of Jesus' power. He believes it. You hear his words. Will you? He doesn't say, will you make me clean? But he states it as a fact. If you will, I will be clean.

[ 4 : 43 ] And so what does Jesus do? The next verse in Mark 1, 41, And Jesus moved with compassion, put forth his hand and touched him, and saith unto him, I will be thou clean.

Able to heal any way that he chose, he chose to reach out and to touch a leper. A song that we sang, it's an old hymn that's been revived in recent days, but in tenderness he sought me, weary and sick with my sin, and on his shoulders he brought me back to the fold again.

Jesus was moved with compassion for this unclean person, the one that nobody else could touch. As Jesus would reach out, you can just hear the people in the crowd say, don't touch him, don't touch him. Leprosy, Jesus would have touched him.

There would have been a long process, a ritual of how long his ministry would have needed to stop, and he would have had to go and sit out. That's what they would have imagined, but they didn't understand that when Jesus touches something, he doesn't become unclean.

That thing becomes, that person becomes clean. But Jesus, the Son of God, Jesus, the Beloved of the Father, Jesus, the Lord in flesh, touches leprosy, and he doesn't become unclean.

[ 5 : 54 ] And with the authority of God Almighty and his merciful hand on the leper, Jesus says, I will be ye cleaned. And he, in verse 142, and as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

So we saw last week, we have a remarkable Redeemer. He saved us in his kindness, by his love and by his mercy. And now we see by his regeneration, by the Holy Spirit, and by his Son, and by his grace.

When Jesus touched our lives, he did not change, but we have been washed by regeneration. So this passage is something, this passage here in Titus, is something that ought to be of great comfort for Christians, from the first day that it was penned, until now, until his Lord's return.

I said that it could have been a hymn, or possibly a creed, it's a faithful saying, that it would have been known. It would have been a portion of scripture that in the water ministry of their church, they would have given the kids, and say, you need to know this.

You need to understand this. You don't need to just know the words, but you need to know what it says. That's what I'm endeavoring to do, by the help of the Holy Spirit here, is to help communicate, and give an understanding, of what is being said in this passage here, that he came to us in kindness, and by love, and by mercy.

[ 7 : 09 ] You know, hymns are just a great way to memorize important doctrinal truth. Let me show you, for example, what can wash away my sin?

What can make me whole again? All right, you knew it. Y'all didn't sound super excited about it, but you knew it nonetheless, right? I didn't teach you that. Somebody did, and you sung it, and you know it, and it's a good thing to hold on to.

What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Good thing for you to remember when you're running around and all your busyness trying to make yourself whole again, it'd be good to take a moment and say, what can make me whole again?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Doctrine's been taught to us. We sing it together. We know it, and we look at scripture here. Above that hymn, in the songbook, it's one of the most common hymns in the different songbooks, the red one, or the blue one, or whatever one you grew up with, the light green one, it would have that song in it, and above it, Hebrews 9.22, and almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without the shedding of blood is no remission.

That song, we rejoice in that fact that the blood has taken away my sin, it's made me whole again. So we see that we desperately needed saving. Last week, we desperately needed saving, we were completely unable to be our own savior, and God saved us with kindness and with love.

[ 8 : 29 ] And today, we'll see that he saved us with mercy and through the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Spirit, and because of that, we're now justified and heirs of eternal life.

Verse number five, not by works of righteousness, which we have done, and we contrasted works of righteousness are when people are trying to come to a place to earn their salvation. Good works is when we take the gratitude that we have for what he did, and then we live it out, the gospel undisplayed, but not by working ourselves to earn salvation, but according to his mercy, he saved us.

We're still, after the new birth, the same, but there are two changes. We are clean and we are new, and that means that we're born again or regenerated. Have you ever felt your uncleanness in the sight of God?

The leper did. Peter does in scripture when he's washing the feet. Jesus is washing the feet of the disciples and he says, I need completely washed. Jesus explains to him that that is something he has done.

Our testimonies, whoever tells a testimony in here, it all starts with a recognizing that we are unclean. An unclean, unclean, but Jesus, if you will, you will make me clean.

[ 9 : 41 ] The testimony of the leper is my testimony. It's your testimony today if you have one as well. And so the reason we needed a generation or washing is that God will not welcome such hearts into new creation.

In verse number 3 and 4 it listed these sins and we said these are things that people want us to identify in but we've now found ourselves not in Adam and not in sin but in Jesus Christ and we were dead but we're now alive unto him.

We were unclean but we have been washed. And it happens in verse 4 but after that the kindness and the love of God appeared, our Savior towards man appeared. It says that in Titus 3 and that same pattern happens in Ephesians 2.

It's speaking about sin and how all of mankind is in it but verse number 4 says but God who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us. We met Jesus on the day a leper outside of Galilee me in Hardin, Kentucky you at wherever you're at college student in California through a radio ministry of hearing in Ohio in upstate New York some of you grew up around here but wherever it was at you came to Jesus unclean and he was the one that did the work.

But mercy was needed. He saved us by his mercy not only by his kindness and by his love but now we're moved by his mercy. It was his kindness that caused him to feel strong affection.

[ 11 : 05 ] Jesus he was moved with compassion as it said in the passage. That strong affection and compassion and pity caused him to be merciful towards us.

And so mercy is different than grace. Grace relates to our guilt and to our shame but mercy relates to our misery. Grace relates to that state of being a sinner before God and a judge but mercy relates to the condition of a sinner in his sin.

Grace is a judicial concept that forgives the crime but mercy is that compassionate concept that helps the criminal recover. Mercy looks at misery where grace looks at guilt.

Jesus looked at us in our misery. He looked at us in our uncleanness. He looked at us in our state knowing we could do nothing about it and he was moved with compassion towards us and in his mercy he saved us.

Now we're filling with how he went about that. It says he saved us through the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Spirit. We have been made new. As it says in Corinthians 5.17 if any man be in Christ he is a new creature.

[ 12 : 12 ] Zach referenced that this morning. All things are passed away and all things are become new. This is what he has done in our lives. But how did he do that? Three doctrinal words I want you to circle here in the C or expressions.

There's the washing of regeneration the renewal of the Holy Ghost and being justified by grace. So there's this washing of regeneration and that word regeneration is used twice in our New Testament but the concept of it is seen many times.

My favorite episode of Nick at Night is John chapter number 3. Right? Nicodemus at night Jesus comes to him and he has a conversation with him and he says you have to be born again.

You have to be made new. Who you are cannot work itself into a position where you will be saved. And so this definition of this washing of regeneration refers to being born again.

That word there of washing is described for us in the Bible when it talks about Jesus after he speaks to the rich young ruler he tells them when they're talking about when God they're telling Jesus we have given up and we've given up this and we've given that and he's saying you haven't given up anything into what you will receive and he says you'll follow me in the regeneration when the son of man shall sit on the throne and that speaks of a rebirth to all of creation and now it's saying it's here for believers by the washing of regeneration.

[ 13 : 35 ] So regeneration means taking in an already existing thing and making it new again and starting over. It's two words coming together begin and again begin again that's what we have and you've experienced that.

People want that opportunity we need that opportunity in our lives. The leper wants that opportunity again and when you come to Christ you know that you need that again. People around the world feel their need for this Romans 1 and 2 shares that with us but Satan loves to provide counterfeit options to make yourself clean.

He loves to provide ways for you to feel like you're going through the cleaning process. Some of you will remember the old commercials with a tide or whatever it was and they would have two different bowls of dirty clothes in front of it and they would pour the one detergent in and they'd pull it out and they would say this makes things sparkly white in comparison to this other one.

The things of this world don't make you cleaner at all they just make you farther and farther away from who God has called you to be farther and farther away from surrendering. One false teaching one false cult one extreme version is found in every culture some type of religion that would try to tell you that you could wash yourself.

What they would do is they would dig a pit and the person would lay inside of the pit and then they would put lattice work across the top of it and they would bring a bull and they would put it on top of that lattice work and they would sacrifice the bull so that the blood would drip down from the lattice work onto the person in the pit and they would lay there and then when they would come out they would give them a glass of milk to say that this is your new birth you're a new creation.

[ 15 : 17 ] Satan loves to alter the truth. He loves to give a imitation of the truth. Doesn't that just sound absolutely bizarre to you? But it makes complete sense because we know that we are broken that we are in need of forgiveness that we are the lepers and we are unclean and we need a new chance at life and if we don't have it given to us we will be most miserable and that is what he offers us so people feel their need for this and there's those who would say this here is the ordinance of baptism and they spilled all kinds of ink and over the fact that they can't become that you can't become a Christian until you become baptized and that deserves its own handling but let me just point out one thing to you hear in this passage notice the agent doing the baptism here baptizing by the washing of regeneration and by the renewing of what?

The Holy Ghost the Holy Spirit not by the senior pastor or the kids pastor or whoever is in the baptism with the person that day but by the Holy Ghost is the agent there we're not speaking of the water baptism which pictures what he has done so it's the renewal of the Holy Ghost Paul wants to emphasize here that is the owing to the way that who God is is not owing to what we have done it's by the mercy of God and not by our own deeds it's by the washing of regeneration the renewal of the Holy Spirit that he does this there's a kind of funny story in the book of Acts where a man named Simon the sorcerer sees what the Holy Spirit is doing and he says I want in on this I would like to buy what is happening and Peter says to him may your money perish with you there is nothing you can do to gain or earn the renewal work of the Holy Spirit that is something that the God of Heaven does that is something that He pours out John 3.6 that which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit we need the Holy Spirit to create that renewal in our lives then he goes on to say that this is done by His Son verse 6 which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior through Jesus Christ our Savior

God saved us by His mercy He saved us by the washing of your generation He saved us by the renewal of the Holy Spirit but He saved us through Jesus Christ our Savior you couldn't have this list without this one could we without the shedding of Jesus' blood upon the cross we would not have these other things that are available in our lives it's why Peter on the day of Pentecost speaks about this holy child Jesus who dies in our place and so Jesus satisfied the justice of God the price was paid death was conquered and through Jesus Christ our Savior He saved us and this leads us to this wonderful truth is that now that we have been saved by His mercy and kindness we're justified and we are heirs of eternal life this is so important as I look at the book of Titus and I see why this would be so needed it's foundational to our understanding if we're going to live a certain way among one another if we're going to live a certain way among this community we have to continually come back to this understanding of what He did when He saved us

Paul has one more thing to say in this real long sentence here alright it's not a run on sentence alright it's not a run on sentence if you know the proper punctuation and He did alright it's a long sentence here and not only do we happen to see this remarkable Redeemer that was shown for us and His attributes of being kind and merciful and this remarkable redemption that He has done in our lives and this remarkable reconstruction that He has done in our lives and making us new and renewing us but now we see this promise of a remarkable ownership justified by grace verse 7 we shall be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life bestowed upon us at the moment of regeneration to be experienced fully and literally in the future this is justification He took our vileness and He gave us His virtue He took our perversion He gave us His purity He took our record of sin and He gave us His record of sinlessness and here in this passage it's such a great Trinitarian passage being that

God the Father saved people according to His mercy through regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Spirit and He poured out abundantly through Jesus Christ there's no conflict here in the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit and they've served in the role of saving us He saved us whom?

[ 19 : 56 ] the Father according to His mercy whom? the renewal of the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ who shed His blood for us but knowing God's love for you is the most relevant truth in all of the world yes it's theologically true it's something you should learn it's something you should memorize it's something you should teach your kids you should help them memorize the scripture we should help them understand what it says but I know that Monday's coming and being able to quote this verse for you is the question is how is it going to make a difference and it makes all the difference in the world a couple weeks ago it was a Wednesday morning and I was reading in 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 verse 8 and 9 and I went there to look for something else but as I was reading in 1 Thessalonians 5, 8, 9 it says but let us who are of the day be sober putting on the breast I was reading verse 6 and 7 but I got to verse 8 and 9 it says putting on the breastplate of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation for God has not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord

Jesus Christ to put on this helmet this hope of salvation for God has not appointed us in the wrath but to obtain salvation and I just thought there and I wrote down on the darkest day of my life the day that I get the diagnosis or whatever it is I want somebody to come to me and say this Trent you have not obtained wrath but you have obtained salvation and that matters it matters more than anything else in all this world and so as I read that and I considered that I get a phone call from a friend in Jamestown, Tennessee and he says hey there's a bivocational pastor here in our town and his name's Earl Sweat and we just really feel for this man he's 52 years old I think he has four children still in his home and he has stage 4 cancer he went to the Mayo Clinic and they didn't offer him any hope and he's going to come to Alpharetta in December for four weeks and there's a place there on Old Milton that's going to do some treatment for him and he's looking for a place and I reached out to several of you and the Little Fields and we looked for them a place they eventually had found a place and I just thought

I just had four children in my home and 52 doesn't sound at one time that sounded like a big number it doesn't sound like a very big number right now and so I just felt this connection to this pastor friend this man that I'd never met and so I reach out to him and I'm just talking to him on the phone and I tell him the thing that I wanted somebody to tell me and it's this I said brother I'm sure you've preached this I'm sure you've studied this but I want to remind you you have not been appointed under wrath but you've been appointed to obtain salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ and so put on that helmet of that hope of salvation wear that every day of your life rejoice in this fact and so what is the goal of all of this what is the goal and it's for this reason the kindness the love the mercy and the shedding of blood is so that we would be justified by his grace and made heirs according to eternal life and so he saved us instead of living in the fear of death he saved us we live as heirs of eternal life and live in the hope of heaven he saves us to change our eternal destiny he saves us from the consequence of sin which is hell he saves us from the place of eternal death that fills the heart with fear he saves us to the place of eternal life that fills the heart with hope namely heaven namely being in the presence of Jesus and so such a recognition is that God had done in all that Paul's message here the Titus and these Christian

Christians all and all the rest of us look you're living in a godless pagan culture don't sit smug and self-righteous condemning the culture but you'd be grateful to know and remember that he saved you he saved us don't look at those people's enemies but they're the ones you're in you're to reach in love we need to help people understand what is available to them because this understanding of truth will produce a gratitude in our lives that should be demonstrated in the way that we live next week Lord willing we look at this statement in verse 9 which says but avoid foolish questions and genealogies and contentions and strivings about the law for they are unprofitable and vain it's this truth that we just went through in these few verses it's a wonderful place to live your life it's a wonderful centerpiece for all of our discussions and let us not get caught up in lesser things in the Christian life let us not get caught up in the fullest questions and the nuances of it all let us not find our conversations being on the peculiar small things that don't really matter but let us continue to rejoice in this let us encourage people not just that their circumstances are going to change let us encourage them let's help them put on that hope that helmet of salvation let us help them see how important that it is that we remember that he saved us and his kindness last week

I shared this quote with you this the theology of Christianity is based on grace but the ethics of Christianity are based on gratitude Titus 3.8 this is a faithful saying these things I will that thou affirm constantly that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works these things are good and profitable unto men in contrast to the foolish questions and genealogies and the contentions and the strivings about the law which are unprofitable and vain when you and I we view our salvation as a redemption that was purchased at a cost the cost of Jesus Christ his death on the cross then we will enjoy it as a gratefulness in remembrance for what he has paid that man and that I spoke to brother sweat there he has not obtained wrath but he has obtained salvation that is our testimony of the day as we'll sing together here in a moment we rejoice together let that be the thing that you most want to talk about this week let it be the thing that you can provide the people that provide the most hope

[ 26 : 20 ] Paul if he was to give a testimony around Thanksgiving time that come from 1st Timothy chapter number 1 verses 12 and 13 he says this and I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me for that he counted me faithful putting me into the ministry who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief I have obtained mercy even though I am a a grinch I guess about saying you shouldn't sing Christmas music until after Thanksgiving and that is a hill that I'm worth dying on is worth dying on alright no some of you tried to kill me on it Jeff did for sure but I'm no I do love Christmas but what I what happens so much and let it not be true among us is that Christmas turns into a time that's just all about getting and gathering and needing more but Thanksgiving is a time that we just say what have I already received that I should rejoice in our testimony starts with but I've obtained mercy look at your life inconsiderate you are the leper you are unclaimed you are in your sin in us he found nothing that was worthy but he showed us mercy and compassion he saw us in our state but he demonstrated grace and he says you're forgiven he saw us in our miserable state and he says

I'm going to show you mercy and that should be our testimony but I obtained mercy if that's you in here today let's live our lives rejoicing just like we said last week he saved us and we rejoice today because we obtained mercy make it a matter this week to share that with somebody how are you doing I've obtained mercy what in the world are you talking about I'm glad you asked alright but in some form or fashion remind yourself of this preach yourself to the gospel and all of your busyness recognize that you are not able to make yourself clean because what can wash away my sin what can make me whole again nothing but the blood and let's rejoice in that and if you're in here today and you can say I've obtained mercy take time and express your gratitude to him and let that be your song let that be your testimony he did it you couldn't clean yourself up you came to him with an incurable lise of sin and if he would cleanse you you would be cleansed and he did he reached out to you and you became clean he did not change he reached out to you because he's compassionate and he's kind and as a Christian that ought to motivate every one of us you'll never see a person that the touch of Jesus would not change their life and so there should never be a mess that we'd run away from we should always be willing to go there and demonstrate the love and kindness of God and his mercy and he saved us a great expression that gratitude is found in lowly service to others and if you're in here the day and you can't say I've obtained mercy more than anything that you have on your list today more than anything you have on your list this week that has to be priority that has to be the greatest of things you need cleansing you need to begin again you need a second chance because in your life you were born a sinner as I was born a sinner and you also are a sinner by choice you knew what was right and you knew what was wrong and you chose to do what was wrong and because of that you are not fit to enter into the kingdom of heaven but he will give you his identity he will give you his mercy and today you can obtain mercy there is no place in all of the world that can provide and tell you about a greater offer and it doesn't come from me it does not come from this church but the God of heaven and the Holy Spirit would wash you the day the Holy Spirit would renew you the day he will absolutely change your life and eternity if you'll turn to him let's pray together heavenly father lord I pray with my brothers and sisters here today and I want to thank you for obtaining salvation lord I want to thank you that I do not have for me wrath that is planned but I have obtained salvation and lord I find great hope in that and today I put on that helmet of salvation of that hope and knowing that this is to protect my mind this is to protect my heart this is to protect me from the gratitude that I so often suffer in and I want to say thank you once again for saving me never head bow never head closed and believers speak unto the Lord and thank him for what he's done and make that the priority of your life set that at the very top of the list of all the things that influence your day and your life but if you're in here today and you do not know



Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior you need mercy you need forgiveness of sin and he offers that to you today you can put your faith and trust in him you can pray to him right there in your seat in this moment pray to him and say to the God of kindness and of grace that you need mercy you need forgiveness of your sin and he will allow you today to be born again he will save you and you can join this community of believers that want to spend our lives rejoicing in this truth Heavenly Father I thank you for your word Lord I thank you that this truth and there in the book of Titus that holds that church together is the same truth that is to hold us together it's to change the way we live among each other it should change the way that we live among our friends and family community this very week in Jesus name I pray Amen Amen■ and I that is you you are you