

THE Rock COMMUNITY CHURCH

Titus 2:11-15

"Saving Grace"

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Anaheim Hills, CA | RockCC.com

23:00

Let's open our Bibles to Titus, chapter 2. And we've been dealing with some very practical instructions in the first 10 verses. If you were here last week, Pastor Mike took us through the first 10 verses.

23:21

And now, the second half of chapter 2, we're going to come to the doctrinal foundation of all of that practical truth was built upon, verses 11 through 14. Now, one of the familiar terms we hear in our society all the time is the word star. Wants to be a star, superstars, actors, musicians, athletes, entertainers, and of course, celebrities, constant awards ceremony shows, right?

24:03

People that have achieved exceptional success in those entertainment fields are called stars. But frankly, most of these stars are fallen stars, like shooting stars. They burn brightly and then come crashing to the ground.

24:23

But who is a true star? Well, in Daniel's final vision in chapter 12 of Daniel, angel Gabriel came to Daniel and he said to him, those who turn and those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above and those who turn many to righteousness like stars forever and ever.

24:57

And Daniel was such a star of righteousness as other godly men and women were of the Old Testament who gained God's approval through their faith. Hebrews 11 tells us that the world considered them unworthy and treated them in such that way without respect.

25:21

But in God's sight, he says that the world was not worthy of them. But that's a great promise. The one who knows and lives the truth and leads others to righteousness are the true stars and they shall shine not for a brief moment in the world but forever and ever.

25:43

At the end of the book of James, the very last verse, it says, whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sin. So, anyone who is instrumental in leading someone to righteousness is a star by God's definition.

26:06

So, who will be the stars in heaven? Who will shine the brightest in eternity? People like we saw last week in the first 10 verses of chapter 2. In verse 10, showing all good faith so that in everything they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior.

26:29

He laid out specific things regarding a godly behavior that demonstrate God's saving power. And the major message that the Apostle Paul wants to communicate to the world

that God is a saving God. And the way he communicates that is to demonstrate through saved people.

26:56

So if saved people don't act like saved people, then God's not getting his message across and we're actually hindering the gospel. Now obviously you have to speak the truth. You can't be saved without hearing the truth about Christ.

27:12

But getting someone to listen is dependent upon the demonstration of the power that they have seen in the lives of others. And that is precisely the point of our text before us. With that in mind, let's read together, Titus 2 verses 11 through 15.

27:36

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

28:09

Declare these things, exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you. This is one of the most magnificent texts about salvation in all of the Bible. God's grace is the absolute foundation of the whole work of redemption.

28:30

And the key phrase I want us to focus on this morning is at the end of verse 14. Zealous for good works, that is the culmination. He tells it that the grace of God appeared and salvation came to all men, verse 11.

28:47

And with it, verse 12, came instructions on how to live and came the blessed hope is the waiting and coming for Christ, verse 13. And then he repeats that Christ gave himself that he might redeem us from every lawless deed and he might purify himself a people for his own possession.

29:11

And here it comes, a people zealous for good works, why? Because it's that passion for goodness that demonstrates a transformed life. Go down to chapter three for a moment. Notice verse eight. The saying is trustworthy and I want you to insist on these things so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works, why?

29:47

Because these things are excellent and profitable for people. See, they make people conclude that God saves. All of the components of salvation were designed to display God as a saving God. The whole point of salvation is to deliver us from what? From sin, right? Sin.

30:13

Now, as we look at these verses, there are four features or four elements of the work of saving grace. So that's our outline to hang our thoughts on. There are four ways in which the grace of God overpowers sin.

30:36

And you're probably very familiar with them, but I want you to see them in light of this great text. First of all, when saving grace comes, it's designed to deliver us from the penalty of sin. Verse 11, for the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people.

30:58

Now, where do I get the penalty of sin out of that verse? It's the word salvation. Salvation means what? To rescue, to save. It's a rescue operation by God to save us from death and danger and destruction.

31:15

So inherent in that word salvation, we find a concept that God wants to deliver us from the penalty of sin, to rescue us from hell and eternal damnation. So, the grace of God appears to rescue. The Bible says the soul that sins shall die.

31:37

The wages of sin is death. And Jesus said, you will die in your sins and where I go... you will die in your sins and where I go, you can never come. So the scripture talks about hell as a place of unceasing fire, weeping, wailing, gnashing of teeth.

32:06

And it's also described as outer darkness and it's forever. So that is what we're saved from. So let's look a little more closely at this statement, verse 11, the very first word, four. Four ties us into the first 10 verses.

32:27

It's a transition. He's saying this is how you're to live and this is how to conduct yourself so that you, verse 10, adorn the doctrine of God, our Savior, for or because, and then he goes on to describe the doctrinal foundation for all of Christian conduct.

32:48

And the foundation for all of Christian conduct is that God has saved you to be, verse 14, zealous for good works, so that you can be used, that we can be used, to lead others to Christ. So Paul looks at salvation from the penalty of sin, and then he starts with the grace of God, verse 11, for the grace of God has appeared.

33:18

Every aspect of salvation is based upon God's grace, whether you're talking about election and eternity past, or talking about glorification in the future, or everything else in between, it all is grace.

33:36

Very familiar verse, Ephesians 2:8-9, you probably learned it when you were a new Christian, for by grace you're what? You're saved through faith and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God.

33:52

It, meaning the whole package, salvation, the faith, at all. It's the gift of God. The only contribution we make is our sinfulness. God's grace and grace alone is what saves. And we all know the definition of grace, probably.

34:14

Grace is God's unmerited favor towards unworthy sinners, and he delivers us from sin and from its penalty. It's getting something we don't deserve, God's grace. So as we look at this phrase, Paul wants us to understand grace not so much as an attribute, but he wants us to understand it as a person.

34:40

Notice this, for the grace of God has what? Appeared. But when did that happen? About 2,000 years ago in a little town called Bethlehem, Jesus arrived, and so he's talking here about the incarnation.

34:58

John chapter 1 verse 14, the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory. Well, what kind of glory was it? Well, it was glory full of grace, John tells us. So he's talking about a historical event here.

35:18

If you can remember back, I don't know how many years, a couple of years we were in the book of Luke. Chapter 2 of Luke verse 28 and 30. You might remember this story. It was Mary and Joseph took baby Jesus to the temple to have him dedicated, and Simeon was there.

35:40

And Simeon had asked God not to let him die until he had seen God's salvation. Simeon took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation.

36:00

Another phrase that's important, for the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all people. He didn't come sparingly with his grace. He came loaded with it. It was for all people. First Timothy chapter 2 helps us out with that.

36:23

Verse 3, this is good and it's pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved. He desires everybody to be saved. And Paul says verse 5, for there is one God, one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all.

36:46

He came to seek and save the lost. You might have heard of John 3:16. For God so loved the what? The world. So the extent of the gift was to match the extent of God's love which was the world. Peter tells us that God is not willing that any should perish, but all should come to repentance.

37:16

All should come to repentance. In the book of Acts, God says, I command all men everywhere to repent. So the question that comes is what do we mean by all people? Some people who we would call universalists would say, well, that's a guarantee that everybody's going to heaven.

37:41

Everybody's going to get saved. Others would say, no, no, no, that's not even an indication that God has provided salvation for everyone. They would take a very narrow view that Jesus died only for a few and that's that those who were saved who were chosen in eternity pass.

38:00

So how are we to understand this when it says bringing salvation for all men? There's an ongoing debate and I'm sure you hear about it all the time and that's the debate between whether Christ died for the whole world or did he died just for the elect.

38:20

Is the atonement limited? Is it not limited? Well, it is a difficult issue to understand and you can pile up people on both sides of the issue but simply I think the way to understand it is that the atonement is sufficient for the world but it's only efficient to those who believe.

38:47

The atoning work of God is unlimited because God is unlimited but it can only be applied to those who believe. See, it's not the sinner's problem to try to figure out who got elected. It's just a simple issue of faith.

39:07

Jesus says if you believe, you're saved. If you don't believe, you're condemned. People are saved because they believe and they're lost because they don't believe. The extent of the atonement is not the issue.

39:22

We get caught up in that debate about limited and unlimited but what we should be concerned about is what Jesus and the apostles told people. And Jesus said to sinners, believe, believe, believe and included in that believing, the meaning is repentance, turning from sin and obedience to Christ.

39:56

So point number two is salvation from the power of sin. Saving grace does deliver us from the penalty of sin but more important issue, God's saving grace delivers us from the power of sin and this is really what's in Paul's mind here.

40:16

This is what's so crucial in this text. The grace of God has appeared and it has brought salvation for all men. Verse 12, training us to renounce ungodliness, worldly passions and to live self -controlled, upright and godly lives in its present age.

40:37

So salvation not only deals with our future but it also deals with our present and it becomes a teacher for us. Our instructor now is the grace of God which is not only a deliverer but a teacher. And that word means to train a child.

40:57

So now we are getting instructions about righteousness and godliness coming through the Holy Spirit and through his word. We have our own private tutor, the Holy Spirit. To the Corinthians, Paul explained to the Corinthians, we have in 1 Corinthians 2, we have received not the spirit of the world but the spirit who is from God that we might understand the things freely given by us, given us by God and we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

41:48

We have, the apostle goes on to say in verse 16, the mind of Christ. In Romans 6, chapter, Romans 6:14 it says, sin will have no dominion over you since you are no longer under the law but you are under grace.

42:12

It no longer dominates us. Saving grace breaks the power of sin, every sin. It does break every chain. So when you come to Christ in salvation, there is a major break. with the power of sin, and now you are moving towards transforming grace.

42:42

See, it reprograms your spiritual computer. All those old discs are thrown out. So there is no excuse for any Christian to live a life of defeat and failure. And this fact is so obvious that John reminds us in his epistle, 1 John 3, of some very exciting words.

43:05

Verse seven, little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, just as he is righteous. See, we are made righteous in Christ, and therefore we practice righteousness.

43:23

Verse nine, he says, no one born of God makes practice of sinning. For God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. You have been born of God. You now have a new nature, and the dominion of sin is broken.

43:45

So you no longer continually, habitually, in an unbroken pattern, continue to practice sin. That's very basic. Romans 5:21 tells us, as sin reigned in death, now grace reigns through righteousness. Righteousness now begins to dominate our lives.

44:10

We have a pattern of right living and holiness. Yes, it is interrupted by sin, as Romans six and seven points out. We still have the flesh. It has not yet been glorified or redeemed, but in Christ we are a new creation, 2 Corinthians 5 says.

44:33

Old things have passed away, and all things are becoming new. Like Paul, at the end of chapter seven of Romans, talks about who's gonna deliver me from this body of death. Some things he wants to do, he doesn't.

44:54

Things he doesn't wanna do, he doesn't. And he cries out, who? The person, not what power, not what principles, but who shall deliver me? It's Christ Jesus is the one that will deliver. See, we would be perfect.

45:09

We are perfect, except for this body of death that we're dragging around. When you get rid of this body, you will be perfect. So righteousness begins to dominate our lives. And of course, Galatians 2:20.

45:29

We are crucified with Christ. It's no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. So that process has now moved us towards sanctification. So what he's telling us here is that the grace of God appears and brings salvation and inherent in that is the transformation of our inner man.

45:53

Now, some teach, even though you're a Christian, you can still live in this ongoing pattern of sin, which in effect is saying that while salvation does deal with your future, it does not, or may or may not deal with your present.

46:13

That's called easy-believism or known as "free grace". But that's not the salvation Paul the apostle is talking about here or anywhere else in the New Testament. If Christians could lose their salvation as some teach, then God wouldn't be making much of a statement about his power to save, would he?

46:37

Who's gonna believe in a God who can temporarily save you until you mess it up? Well, he can save, but he can't keep. And then also if Christians couldn't be lost, but could lose their faith and reject and deny Christ's Lordship and still be saved, we wouldn't be even pressed either because we'd say, well, he could save, but he can't transform.

47:03

All of those things fall short of what God does. He saves, he keeps, and he does transform. Now, moving to verse 12, we are taught to deny some things and to affirm some things. So there's a negative and a positive here.

47:24

So first, let's look at the negative verse 12. We are instructed to deny or renounce something. So when you came to Christ, you came because you wanted to be delivered from sin, right?

47:39

So there's some people that might say, well, no, I just wanted some fire insurance. I'd like to continue my life this way, but I certainly don't want to go to hell. Well, that's really not the stuff of genuine repentance.

47:56

Because when the Holy Spirit convicts, according to John 16, he's not convicting the world of hell, is he? No, he's convicting the world of what? Sin. Being saved is a byproduct. Being saved from hell is a great byproduct, but the transformation is Paul's main point.

48:23

So he says, at the point of salvation, there is a denial of ungodliness and worldly passions. What we're doing is we're saying no to the way things used to be. The first thing that goes here, he says, is ungodliness.

48:40

What it means is a lack of reverence for God. And you can find that clearly defined in the first chapter of Romans 18 to 32. Basically it says, you have the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all those people who know the truth about God, but are rejecting it.

49:02

And then he adds a second component. He says, salvation instructs us not only to deny ungodliness, but worldly passions, worldly passions. That includes all the sinful lusts and cravings that characterize a natural man.

49:21

But Galatians 5:16 tells us that when we walk by the Spirit, we will not fulfill the worldly desires of the flesh. We are no longer under its power, so we don't have to give into it. A few weeks ago, we had a baptism here in the church, and that was a great, great object lesson, especially if you've never been to a baptismal service, because it's saying what Paul says in Romans chapter six.

49:54

It was a graphic illustration of what happens when you get baptized, you get put under the water and you come out of the water. It's a picture of what happens to you in Christ.

You are dead and buried under that water, and when you come out of that, you are a new creature in Christ.

50:16

So if you have a photo or a video of your baptism, anytime sin's harassing you, you can look back and say, no, no, no, I made a public confession. I am dead and buried to sin. It has no more power over me.

50:36

So let's look at the positive. So not only to deny some things, but to affirm some things. That is to live self -controlled, upright, and godly in the present age. That is the evidence of a transformed life right there, and it shows how we've been delivered from the power of sin, self -controlled.

50:59

Now that's a word we've seen four or five times already in this small epistle. So one of the things that happens when you're saved, you can now control yourself. You can bring the unredeemed flesh under the control of the Spirit of God and start doing what's right.

51:16

Self -control means proper balance, spiritual priorities, wise choices, all of those type of things. Secondly, he mentions uprightly or righteously. You start to live right, and doing that affects you, but it affects people around you.

51:36

You are demonstrating what right living and what righteousness is. And then thirdly, he says godly. We are no longer God's enemies. Now we are God's children. Instead of ignoring God, we now honor and praise, and we worship him.

51:57

That is the evidence of a transformed life. So salvation delivers us from the penalty of sin in the future, namely hell, and the power of sin in the present, that unbroken pattern of continual sin. We are now in a pattern of holiness, and we are no longer practicing sin.

52:24

Now look at the end of verse 12. It says in the present age. This is not future, this isn't in the sweet by and by. This is now. Saving grace not only delivers us from future hell, but educates us now to present present holiness in the here and now.

52:47

This is an essential understanding in the matter of salvation. Now the third point here Paul lays out. Saving grace delivers us from the presence of sin. So this next verse tells us how we are to live this self -controlled, upright, godly life.

53:14

How do we do it? Verse 13. Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. We live in hope, verse 13 says, and the hope is that someday soon Jesus will come and when he comes he will deliver us from the presence of sin all together.

53:38

That's why Paul said it's far better for me to be with Christ, for to depart and to be with Christ for me to live is Christ but to die is gain. It's a better place. Of course Romans 8. The whole creation, he says, is groaning, waiting for the adoption and the redemption of our bodies.

54:04

That's why we hold on to first John 3. Verse 2. We are children of God. It has not yet appeared what we will be but we know when we see him we shall be like him. You are going to be like Christ. Think about that for a while.

54:28

You're going to be perfect without sin. See the hope of Jesus's return has a purifying effect on us. If you really believe Jesus was coming soon, if you knew he was coming somehow next Tuesday, would your life look any different this next week than it did last week? Probably.

54:52

I want the kind of salvation that promises me someday sin will not exist. Everything we do is affected by sin. Everything I mean this world is just all the every little problem that we have is whether it's our health, whether it's relationships, whether it's whatever. But God's grace is going to remove us from the presence of sin altogether.

55:24

That's our hope. That's what we're looking and waiting for. Now we're not hoping like gee I hope it happens. Maybe it will. Maybe it won't. No. This is the idea of anticipating, longing. That's what we're waiting for.

55:39

The blessed hope. What does that mean? The hope that blesses. It's what's going to bring blessing and that's the appearance of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus. We live in that hope. Our incorruption, our corruptible self will put on incorruption and our mortal will put on immortality.

56:03

And then one note about verse 13. At the end of verse 13 he calls Christ by this title, our great God and Savior Christ Jesus. So this is just another one of those wonderful passages about in scripture that removes the doubt about who Jesus Christ was.

56:25

There's always people who want to try to deny the deity of Christ, namely false religions and cults. They all have the bottom line same issue. Ask them who Jesus is and they'll tell you everything except God.

56:48

I think of another one in Hebrews chapter 1 verse 3. It says that the Son of God is the radiance and of God's glory and the exact representation of his nature. So there's another one of those verses that refers to the Lord Jesus has been equal with God in the very essence and very nature.

57:12

I thought of another one Romans 9:5 is a great statement. It says Christ who is God over all bless forever. Now that's pretty clear. Christ who is God. So here's a statement that simply says, our great God and savior, Christ Jesus.

57:31

He came in a humble state the first time with grace. He's going to return in an exalted state with glory. That's why Paul says in Romans 13, now is your salvation near than when you first believed. What kind of salvation?

57:53

The kind that keeps you from the presence of sin. So we have salvation from the penalty of sin, from the power of sin, but not yet from the presence. Philippians 3:21 tells us, he who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body by the power that enables him to be subject to all things himself.

58:24

That's the blessed hope, to finally be delivered from sin altogether. And fourth and finally, salvation delivers us from sin's possession. Verse 14, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness, to purify for himself a people for his own possession, who are zealous for good works.

58:58

This is a wonderful truth. A person who is not saved is in the possession of sin. We were owned by Satan, but when you became a Christian, you have a new king. You move from the kingdom of darkness and death to a different kingdom, the kingdom of light and life.

59:21

You have a new owner now, you have a new master, and sin does not possess you any longer. Romans 6:16 -17 declares that we were slaves of sin, but saving grace broke that ownership. Like Romans 7 says, the first husband dies and the partner is no longer in bondage.

59:45

Her first husband, he says, was sin and is dead and there is no longer bondage. There is a complete deliverance and we become, I love this, his own possession. Ephesians chapter five, very familiar words to us.

01:00:12

Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of the water of his word. Having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and blameless.

01:00:36

So he wanted us for his own possession. And you can read through scripture similar verses that we are hid in Christ in God and no man is able to pluck us out of his hand. And nothing shall ever be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

01:01:00

We are secure forever. This is a fundamental component of salvation. Possession, now we all have possessions, right? Now, if you came over to my house and looked in my garage, in fact, I have two garages and there are lots and lots of possessions.

01:01:23

But if you looked around, you would probably say, you know, Bruce, you need a dumpster here because most of this stuff, it might be your possessions, but it should be out. But my treasures, they're locked up in the house, right?

01:01:40

Not in the garage. They were locked up in a very safe place, safe. Safe from my wife, safe from thieves, safe... And the reason I bring that up is because the word possession, let me help you out with the word.

01:01:56

The word possession means treasures. This word here translates as treasure. God wants people who are a treasure to him. Why? Here's the key. Into verse 14, zealous for good works. A people who live in good deeds so others can see the saving power of God on display.

01:02:23

That's the point of the whole thing. Now, does he want us just doing good deeds? No. Does he want us happy, maybe even excited about doing good deeds? No. What does it say? We're to be zealous. Have you ever known a zealot?

01:02:40

They're like fanatical, right? We're to be enthusiastic, passionate, totally committed to doing good deeds. See, we have the salvation that delivers us from the possession of sin. Permanently. And saving grace breaks forever the ownership.

01:03:01

You can't go back into it. Why? Because the Lord paid the price and the justice of God was satisfied when the purchase was made. For somebody to come along and try to teach you that you can lose your salvation is basically to say that God didn't pay a sufficient price for an eternal purchase.

01:03:24

That God could get us started, but he may lose us along the way. See, unless we understand what the heart of this text is about, salvation, we could be confused. You might think salvation is only deliverance from sin.

01:03:41

It isn't. It's deliverance from the power of sin as well. And you might think there's some question about the future. Are we gonna actually be delivered from the presence of sin? Yes, we are. And you might think somewhere along the line you could slip in and out of this deal.

01:04:01

If any of those incorrect views are true, then we're gonna have a hard time convincing the world that we have a saving God, aren't we? When a sinner comes to the end of his rope and he wants redemption, and he wants forgiveness, and he wants salvation, does he want a God who can't hang on to him, or can't break the power of sin?

01:04:27

What does it mean to be a Christian? It means we have a God that can save us from the penalty, and the power, and the presence of sin, and will always be the possession of God. Let's conclude with Deuteronomy chapter 26.

01:04:50

And I'd like to remind you at the conclusion of our service down here in the front on the right, there'll be some members of our prayer team. If you need prayer for any reason,

for someone to pray with you or for you, and most importantly, if you have not given your heart and your life over to Jesus Christ, and you wanna be delivered and experience God's saving grace, they would be happy to help you with that.

01:05:18

Deuteronomy 26:18-19, so Moses is proclaiming to ancient Israel, he says, and the Lord has declared today that you are a people for his treasured possession, and he has promised you, and that you are to keep all his commandments, and that he will set you in praise and in fame, and in honor high above all nations that he has made, that you shall be a people holy to the Lord your God, as he promised.

01:05:55

We have a tremendous responsibility. We've been left in this world to be a people zealous for good works, and thereby adorn the doctrine of God, our savior. God is a saving God, and he wants to save, but it isn't shocking to us that the evidence of his saving power is in great measure dependent on us.

01:06:22

That's a high calling, a great privilege, and an awesome responsibility. Would you pray with me? Father, let us display this kind of salvation for a watching world in the way we live, in the way we speak, the way we act that others seen what you've done in our lives would draw them to you and give you glory, Lord.

01:06:51

We thank you for this wonderful opportunity, Lord, to learn again these great truths, and Lord, we praise you for what you've done in our lives, and what you will do in others' lives who hear this message.

01:07:07

We ask you save them by your grace in the name of Christ. Amen.