

Our Great Redeemer

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Bible Verse: Titus 2:14-15
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Well, we have a wonderfully special morning together as we gather in the presence of Christ, to remember his sacrifice on our behalf, to remember his love for our eternal souls, to remember the love of the Father that sent Christ on a mission of mercy, to remember our Savior who gladly accomplished redemption on our behalf, to remember the work of the blessed Holy Spirit who applied redemption to our hearts and drew us to Christ. We gather together surrounded by an ocean of the love of God as we come together today and we have an additional privilege, I believe, here at Truth Community Church, I certainly am conscious of it this morning of just being able to gather together with tenderhearted like-minded believers who love the word of God, who come not because they have to be here but because you want to be here, you want to hear the word of God, you do love Christ, you do respond to the word and you look forward to the work of the Spirit in your heart through the word. Those are great, great privileges and whether you've been with us for a long time or a short time, maybe you've been away for a while through circumstances beyond your control and now you're back, I just want you to know that we're glad that you're here. It's with a great sense of love for Christ and a love for his word and a love for one another that we opened the word here this morning and come to a wonderful text that will prepare our hearts well to celebrate the Lord's Supper together.

You know, if you step back for just a moment and remember what our lives were like before the Lord saved us, you are struck afresh by how all of this is an act of free grace of God, that everything that we described, all of these blessings that we enjoy and gather together in the spirit of Christ and enjoy those things together, all of it is necessarily a free act of God because we were all born into sin with hostile lives and hostile natures and hostile hearts toward the living God. From a human perspective, salvation was utterly impossible. There was nothing that you or I could have done that would have offered up to God a sufficient sacrifice for our sins in order to turn away his displeasure from us. There was nothing that we could have done with our cold, stony, irreverent, indifferent hearts that, you know, a leopard can't change its spots and in the same way a sinner can't change his heart from one of cold indifference to Christ into loving him. That's something that had to be done from above. Jesus said in John 8:34 that everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin, and in 2 Peter 2, it says the sin that overcomes us, enslaves us. And what is a slave except someone that does not have freedom? What is a slave except someone who is at the bidding of a master and his will is not his own? And so slaves have no freedom, slaves simply do what their masters tell them to do, and according to Scripture, all that

are born into the world, including you and me when we were born into the world, we were a slave to the master of sin and that was a sad, dark place for us to be where we had no hope nor no life of God in the world.

Turn to Titus 3 with me. We're going to be looking at verses 14 and 15, but I want to just use the context, the broader context of the book to just remind us of where we were. As you're turning there, I know that many of you have had near misses and serious car collisions or other kinds of danger, health dangers that you didn't know whether you would live or die as a result of, but that experience of having a near miss of a very serious car accident is something that is instructive and illustrative to help us today. You have that sense of, "Oh, I could have been killed there. That could have been catastrophic for my life and for my loved ones." And you know, you just missed the collision by just the by the hair on your head, so to speak. Well, in a far greater way, beloved, that's the sense that we should have and the gratitude and the relief and the marvel that we have at being in Christ and being delivered from our very sinful selves.

Titus 3:3 reminds us of our former condition when it says, "we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts," there's that slavery word again, "enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another." Those of you especially that were saved in the course of your adult life can look back and you can see that, can't you? The hatefulness of your heart, and the anger, and the lusts, and the foolishness and the deception both being deceived and deceiving others with hypocrisy. That's a picture of what we were like and yet here we are this morning, and we are gathered together in the name of Christ, predominantly those together that have been truly born again, we have fellowship with the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, we have fellowship with one another that is particularly sweet as we think about Christ and how he's worked the fear of God into our hearts in a loving way, and here we are now we're going in a very short moment we'll be remembering him in the tangible way in Communion that the Lord appointed us to remember his death and to proclaim his death until he comes. What can we say about these things? Today's passage shows us the wonder of what Christ did for us.

Look at, we'll read from it verse 11 in chapter 2. Chapter 2, verse 11. When you and I were like that, when sin owned us, as death hovered over us, eternal judgment was breathing down our neck and we were kissing the chains of our bondage, we liked our sin, didn't we? You loved your sin. You did not even know that there was a different way of life, there was not a different kind of life to be had and you loved yourself, and you loved what you did. What happened to us? How is it that we are no longer in that realm as Christians and now we are gathered together in this blessed realm that we find ourselves in this precious church here this morning? What happened? Chapter 2, verse 11,

11 ... the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, 12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus,

14 who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. 15 These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

There you were in bondage to your sin, and the grace of God appeared, as it were, the grace of God came to you. Somehow, somewhere, someone brought the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to you and told you that there was a Savior who had gone to the cross and had borne the wrath of God on behalf of sinners, had risen from the dead showing that God had accepted the sacrifice, and now you were bidden to come to Christ, you were invited to come to receive free mercy, free grace, a promise of eternal life, a promise that all of your sins would be forgiven and that you would be reconciled to a holy God, delivered from the threat of hell and damnation, and promised eternal life with God in heaven in the gracious presence of Jesus Christ the Lord. That is grace. That is undeserved favor. That is a kindness and a love that the world knows nothing about and it's revealed to us in the Scriptures, and we were all in that position of being in bondage to sin and here in Titus 2:14 in particular, we see how Christ graciously came to earth, graciously accomplished a work that would thousands of years later be applied to your soul and to deliver you from that awful position of bondage.

How did he do that? How did Jesus Christ deliver us from our spiritual slavery? I want to show you three simple matters today. In one sense, they're simple in that they can be grasped even by the youngest child, and yet the profound depths of them could never be fully plunged in this life for sure. What does this text tell us? Well, first of all, Jesus Christ took your place. Jesus Christ took your place, meaning that where you deserved judgment and condemnation from God, Jesus Christ, according to the eternal plan of God, stepped into the world and stepped into your place, as it were. He took your sin upon him. He stepped into your shoes. He took the posture as if he had lived your sinful life, that he had thought all of your sinful thoughts, as though he had done that and then he went to the cross where God struck him with judgment so that the judgment would not fall on you. In mercy, my friends, Jesus Christ intervened on your behalf and he did what you could not do for yourself.

Look at verse 14 where it says, the end of verse 13, let's say, just to pick up the relative clause context, "our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us." He gave himself for us. The simplicity of those words show us how Christ intervened for us. He left heaven in order to become a man. He gave of himself by surrendering the prerogatives of deity, not the essence of deity but the prerogatives of deity. He left his glorious throne, his glorious home in heaven, in order to come and live among men. He took on a human nature, added a human nature to his deity, and he did this for a specific purpose. Beloved, it was infinitely more than coming to just show us an example of how a godly man would live. Christ was infinitely more than just a teacher or a prophet. He was God in human flesh, and he came to do something that only God in human flesh could do, he came to pay the price for our release from sin. He took the punishment for everyone who would ever believe in him. Throughout all of the course of time before the coming of the cross, men were looking forward, looking to the future, looking ahead to

the promised coming Deliverer that God had promised, and they rested their faith in a promise that had not yet been completed, you might say. We, on our part, we look back in time, we look back and see that in Jesus Christ the promise was fulfilled.

And what did he do at the cross? Look at Isaiah 53. Some of us have turned to these familiar passages today dozens if not hundreds of times over the years and decades. For some of you, maybe you're hearing them for the first time. You're fresh out of false religion. You've just God has called you out and these things are almost brand new to you. Well, regardless of which end of the spectrum you're on, the wonder and the beauty of the substitutionary work of Christ is fresh and precious for each one of us.

Look at Isaiah 53:4 through 6 where we read this, "Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him." God imputed to Christ our sin. He treated Christ as though Christ was guilty of all of our sin and guilt and he punished him for it. Christ gave himself over to that divine punishment, and why did he do that? He did it out of grace. He did it out of love. He did it out of kindness. Jesus Christ is so full of love for unworthy sinners, so full of grace for those who are rebels against his will, that he went to the cross and he gladly, voluntarily, without any compulsion from an external source, he undertook to take our punishment on the cross and that all of the wrath of God that you and I deserved, he took, he absorbed, he felt, he endured, he suffered, and this is an indication of how he gave himself for us.

He gave himself over to the punishment of God on our behalf. He did it for us so two things, you could say, many, many more, but just two things to highlight here. 1. He did this in a negative sense so that you and I would not have to bear that wrath ourselves. We could not bear it. We would have spent eternity in hell bearing the wrath that our sins deserved. Christ intervened so that that would not fall upon us. Then in a secondary, in a second way, in a positive aspect of it, as Nathaniel read earlier, he did this so that we would be reconciled to God, not only having the narrow escape of the fatal collision of us with God's wrath but the positive dimension of coming into the family of God, entering into the realm of God, accepted by God, adopted by God into his family, showing forth that we were chosen before the foundation of the world, redeemed, brought out from under our bondage to sin and now being alive to Christ and being in the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what he did. That's what he gave himself up for at great personal cost, at great eternal torment suffered and felt in his soul, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" In his infinite person he took an infinite weight of sin and guilt and judgment and wrath during those lonely hours on the cross, and through it all the love that he had for sinners, his obedience to his Father's will, his glad giving of himself, he stayed there when he could have called down 10,000 legions of angels who were waiting, as it were, waiting for him to say, "Come and stop this!" He restrained himself. He gave himself in order to do this: there was a price that required you to be delivered from your sin. There was a ransom price that had to be paid and he was paying that price with great

suffering, in great love, in order to accomplish the result that now we are here to celebrate here today.

Beloved, Christ was not suffering for his own sins on the cross. Everybody in the judicial process acknowledged that he had found, Pilate said, "I find no guilt in this man." Jesus Christ was substituting his life for yours. He was substituting his life for the life of every sinner who would ever believe in him. He took the penalty that was rightfully ours. We were the lawbreakers, the lawbreaker is the one who, in any economy of justice, suffers the punishment for the sins and the laws that he has broken. Christ steps outside of that legal realm, so to speak, and what I mean by that is that he went beyond the legal realm in order to fulfill the punishment that was required in his own body. He took the penalty that was rightly ours to suffer. And, beloved, you and I that are in Christ, we can look at the cross and we can rightly say, "He did that for me. He did that for me. He did it for lots of others, but He also did that for me by name." As J. Gresham Machen so famously said, you know, "When he was on the cross He thought even of me because He bore my sins." He was a direct substitute for me, for you who believe in Christ. He was a direct substitute, and as a result in that, in his infinite mind and in a way that I can't begin to try to delineate for you, somehow you by name were in the mind of Christ as he suffered on the cross. Somehow your sins in all of the fullness of them were somehow absorbed by him. He was he was aware of them. He took them upon himself so that the punishment of God that you fully, completely deserved was fully and completely poured out on Christ so that there was nothing left to punish you over because Christ had paid it all. As we sing, "Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain, he washed it," what? "White as snow." White as snow, and beloved, you understand, right, that you and I, we didn't deserve that. We were not entitled to that. We had no reason to expect that because we had forfeited all of our claims on God when we fell in Adam and when we affirmed Adam's sin in the way that we subsequently lived. Oh, oh, oh, the love of Christ for sinners like you and me, to give himself like that for us, to do a work of substitution to free us from sin. There we were with the stroke ready to fall upon us and Christ, as it were, I'm speaking in metaphors now, Christ stays the hand of God, says, "No, don't punish them. Punish Me instead. Everything about Your punishment, O God, is just. It is right. It must be done. Your justice must be fulfilled." But Christ takes it as his own. The sinless one takes on the sin of rebels and endures in unimaginable sufferings on our behalf, and now you and I in Christ, we look back with gratitude that he did that for us, our words of praise, our songs of praise, they're necessary, they're sincere, but they could never adequately give a return to Christ for what he's done for us.

What a wonderful Savior is Jesus our Lord. He took your place. Secondly, we see in this text that Jesus Christ paid your price. He paid your price. Go back to Titus with me, Titus 2:14. This text just pulsates with the work of Christ, what he did on our behalf. Every clause, every word is important here. Verse 14, he gave himself for us, and what did he do, what was the end, what was the purpose of his giving of himself? "To redeem us from every lawless deed." To redeem us from every lawless deed. When Jesus Christ died on the cross, he was paying the price that God required for sinners to be released from their slavery to sin, and the word redemption is tied to the language of slavery in the first century. There were many slaves in the first century and someone could pay a ransom

price, what was called a ransom price to set them free. You give a price to the owner and he allows them to go free. The price becomes the cost of their freedom. Well, Scripture teaches us to think about the work of Christ in our salvation as being the payment of a ransom price. It is redemption. The payment of the ransom price was called redemption and what Jesus Christ did as he was dying on the cross was he paid the price to redeem you from your slavery to sin. It was a price that he paid to God, not to Satan. He paid this price to God in order that you might be set free. And notice, beloved, especially if you've had a hard spiritual week in the seven days just passed since we were last together on a Sunday morning, and you've manifested the sinfulness of the evil that remains within you, notice how thorough and comprehensive what Christ did on your behalf is. It says he gave himself for us to redeem us, to deliver us from every lawless deed. From every lawless deed. Every sin that you committed before your conversion was covered and paid for. Every sin that you've committed as a Christian and which you came in feeling, you know, from the past week and your struggles with sin and temptation, those too. Every sin that you will ever commit before you go to glory, Jesus Christ on the cross redeemed you from every lawless deed, every one of them without exception. Christ, who knows our hearts completely, Christ, who knows your private deeds as well as those which men are aware of, Christ who knows what you speak in secret, what you cherish in your heart, Christ who knows the worst about you, beloved, he went to the cross knowing all of that thoroughly and perfectly, went to the cross to redeem you from all of it. From every lawless deed. From every illicit relationship. From every act that you've committed against others.

Whenever it comes to this, I often think, and often want to say and just to assure because lots of people hear these messages and just speaking to that young woman, or maybe a woman older in life who underwent an abortion for her own convenience and now just feels the weight of having sacrificed the life of her child for her own convenience, and now the weight of that sometimes makes it hard to fall asleep at night. What a joy to look into Scripture and to say that Christ looks in mercy on that and forgives and took the payment, paid the price for even that that you might be set free, that your conscience could be cleansed before God, and to know that God accepts you, God has forgiven you, God has released you from all of that guilt. And perhaps for the man who pressured her into that, said, "That's your problem. You go fix it. You have to." And making all kinds of love, so-called love contingent upon the act. And just the wretchedness of all of that, regardless of how well it is promoted and accepted in our society today, the wretchedness of all of it. And beloved, all I'm doing here is making an illustration, is just making an illustration that which none of us would speak to others, that which we hide in shame is open and known before God, it was open and known before Christ as he went to the cross, and he spread his everlasting arms as wide as your sin could go, went beyond it, and took it all onto himself and paid the price for your deliverance from sin.

He paid your price. Do you see why the gospel is good news? Do you see why this is mercy that we sing about? Do you see why we will spend eternity praising him for that, that he who was innocent, pure, undefiled, and exalted above the heavens, stepped into the realm of man, stepped into the realm of our sin and guilt, and took it all on himself in love for you, for you, for you, for you, in order that your sins could be forgiven, your

conscience could be cleansed, you could be reconciled by God, declared righteous by him, treated not only as though you had never sinned but as though you had fulfilled everything about the law of God as perfectly as Jesus Christ himself did. Your sin imputed to Christ. Christ's righteousness imputed to you. This is the perfect, wonderful gift of Christian salvation and here you and I are today to celebrate it together.

Jesus said about his own life and ministry in Mark 10, he said: even the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many. It's why he came. It's why he came. And you see, you know, for those of you, and I know that there are many of you like this in this room here today, you want to grow in your love for Christ. You hear these truths and they resonate in your heart and you want to love him better. And as elders and as the so-called pastor here, what a privilege it is to have conversations with people like you, sweet-minded, tender-hearted Christians who love the word of God and it's just evident in the humble way that you speak, the love that you have for Christ. Well, understand that your love for Christ is deepened and you grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ by dwelling on this aspect of his love for you, that you go there again and again. You don't find greater love in trying harder to keep certain rules, beloved, you grow in love by absorbing more and more the truth of Scripture, the truth of sound doctrine that unfolds for you the atonement of Jesus Christ. And you realize that like the woman who came to Jesus during his earthly ministry crying tears of repentance, sufficient fluid coming from her eyes that she was able to wash his feet with the tears from her eyes, and washing them and polishing his feet with her hair. Why did she do that? It's because she loved him. She saw his excellence. God had given a preview in her heart of how he would deliver her from her sins and Jesus himself spoke to her and said, "Your sins are forgiven, go and sin no more."

Oh, if you would grow in your love for Christ, grow in the devotion that you give to these kinds of truths and realize that the love of Christ has set you free, the blood of Christ has set you free and that he did this out of love, not from anything that you did to prompt him. This was his idea. This was his love for you, not your love for him. We love because he, what? He first loved us. The priority was Christ loving us, not vice versa. The initiative, beloved, in your sinful condition was not you moving toward God, it was God moving toward you. You know, Jesus said, "No one can come to Me except the Father draw him." All of these things, all of these things to just show us and to endear your heart to Christ as we soon approach the Table.

Look over at 1 Peter. If you're in Titus 3, turn to the right just past Hebrews and James and you'll come to 1 Peter. I want to look at just a couple of texts here. Time is being kind to us today, that's a change. 1 Peter 1, beginning in verse 3, expressing the out-flowing of gratitude and praise in response to these things, ascribing to God, ascribing to Christ, ascribing to the Spirit of God the worship of a grateful heart, of a heart that marvels at an undeserved love like what we've been describing. 1 Peter, beginning in verse 1, he speaks about those who are chosen. Verse 2, "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," blessing God, ascribing glory to him,

ascribing honor and praise and magnifying his name as worthy, blessed be his name in that way. Why? Who according, "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Those of you that grew up in religious traditions that taught you to fear, to be afraid over possibly losing your salvation, look at this text and put those fears away. If God saved you, he will keep you. He loved you enough to go to the cross for you and he knew in advance your sin, the fullness of it, and it says right here, right in God's word, you are protected by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, that he who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus. This is wonderful salvation that we celebrate today.

Then in verse 18 of 1 Peter 1, "knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers." Do you see the word redemption there in verse 18? You were not redeemed with perishable things. Well, what were you redeemed with? What was the price of your salvation? What did it cost because there had to be a price paid for your guilt. Here's the price, verse 19, "precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ." Christ redeemed us. Christ loved us and he gave himself up for us.

Look over at Galatians. I quote this verse often and, Lord willing, for another whatever more time the Lord gives me in ministry, I plan to quote it a whole lot more. Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ." Galatians 2:20. I'll give you a moment to find it. "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who," what's it say? He "loved me and gave Himself up for me." The love of Christ was not a mere sentiment, it was a love of self-sacrifice, seeking the good of one who deserved judgment. That, my friends, is grace. Jesus Christ redeemed you if you are in Christ. If you're not in Christ, today would be a wonderful day for you to turn in repentance to him in response to the love of God laid out before you, magnified through his word to show the excellency of Christ, the horror and the insignificance and the judgment that the world deserves of which you are a part of if you're not in Christ. Now God calls you and beckons you, "Leave that behind, leave the world behind, set yourself aside, and come to Christ in order to be saved."

Today, August 21, right now, at shortly after 10:00 AM, this can be the day, the moment of your salvation if you would turn your heart to Christ. There's no reason not to. If there's any unwillingness in the realm of salvation, understand it's not from God. If there is unwillingness in salvation, it is all the part of man because God loved the world and sent Christ in order to be the Savior of the world. God now comes through the preaching of his word and earnestly pleads with every sinner who would be under the sound of my voice to come to Christ because God is willing to save you as shown by the precious blood shed at the cross that still avails for sinners just like you. And Jesus says, "Come to

Me, all you who labor and are heavy-laden and I will give you rest." You have the promise of Christ that if you will come, he will save.

Well, what's the conclusion of all of these things? And now that we're in Christ, we contemplate the... one other thing here is I just want to emphasize one other thing when I say that he paid your price, Jesus Christ paid your price, it says there in Titus 2, turn back there with me. I just want to give you a cross reference to reinforce this as well that you won't need to turn to. Titus 2:14. I highlighted it already, he redeemed us from every lawless deed. Beloved, Scripture says the same thing through a different apostle, the same principle is established elsewhere in 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." In verse 7 of 1 John 1, "the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin." Wonderful grace. A perfect salvation, nothing lacking, all of it fulfilled in Christ, and now pardon and acceptance with God through those who put their faith alone in Christ alone.

Well, what's the outcome of it, then, in verse 14 of Titus 2? What's the necessary consequence, you could say of this for our third point this morning? First point was that Jesus Christ took your place. Secondly, Jesus Christ paid your price. Thirdly, now Jesus Christ owns your life. Jesus Christ owns your life and no true Christian would have it any other way. No one who truly understands the gospel and the love of Jesus Christ would ever want Christ as Savior but reject him as Lord. The mere thought is a travesty. The fact that it's been taught for decades at certain places in Texas is a travesty. It is impossible to look at redemption, understand the guilt of your sin, understand the love of Christ and the price that he paid, and say, "I'll take Him as Savior but I'm still going to run my own life. I have no responsibility to repent. I have no need to repent." Beloved, understand that that is a demonic distortion of truth. No one who understands these things could have anything other than a tender, receptive heart to Christ that gladly submits to him and mourns over the fact that there is any lingering sin still in their heart and life.

And this is just the teaching of Scripture right here in this verse, verse 14, third point today, Jesus Christ owns your life. He owns your life and a true believer would have it no other way but this is what Scripture says as it talks about the atonement, as it glorifies Christ in his work on our behalf. It tells us why he did it. It wasn't simply to deliver you from hell. It has consequences in this life. Verse 14, he redeemed "us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds." A people for his own possession. beloved, there was an exchange of slavery that happened. You were a slave to sin, a slave to Satan, and Christ saved you and redeemed you and now you're his slave. You're his servant. He saved you that you might be under a gracious Master with a life given over to doing his bidding, shaping your character toward what he wants, prior verses of Titus 2, just for context. To live for him. To speak for him. To pray to him. To love him with all of your heart, soul, strength and mind even if required to suffer and even to die for him because you belong to him. A people for his own possession.

You see, beloved, you see, and it could be no other way. It could be no other way and that's why I started in part the message today as I did, grateful and expressing gratitude to

God and to you to be in the midst of a people that love him like you do, that love him with a tender heart. This is the fruit of true salvation. He intends us to live for him zealously, to serve him willingly, gladly, that our lives would be for his glory, that we would turn from earthly pursuits and earthly vanities in order to have a heart that is engaged with the majesty of his glorious face, engaged with the majesty of his word. When Christ saves a man, when he saves a woman, he puts his Spirit inside them, and the Spirit produces a change, a change of life, a change of attitude, a change of disposition, a change of affections. One of the manifestations of that change is a desire to love and praise Christ, and a desire and a love and a belief and a confidence in his holy word, a supernatural confidence in the authority and truthfulness of the word of God, the 66 books of the English Bible as given originally in Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic, all of this being an aspect of being owned by him.

Beloved, if Christ loved you like what we've said today, and he does, if Christ loves you like that, then isn't it obvious that the only possible way that a redeemed person could respond to him is to serve him zealously? This kind of redemption defines your life purpose going forward. You do not exist to maximize the pleasures of earthly life, to maximize how big your barn can be, how big your bank account can be, how high you can get on the corporate ladder. You exist to maximize the glory of the one who redeemed you like that. You understand that your life has been taken over, it has been overwhelmed by the love of Christ, and in response to that great love, you are a willing captive to give all of your love back to him. Imperfect and marred as it may be, to give your love back to him. 1 Corinthians 6:20 says, "you have been bought with a price therefore glorify God in your body."

These things are precious. These things are true. These things are the only way that a man or woman, boy or girl can escape eternal damnation. This is the revealed will of God for mankind to repent and come to Christ to be saved. And what does the church of Jesus Christ do with it? Verse 15, we'll just touch on this, "These things," these things which have been explained in chapter 2, Paul says to Titus and by extension the church of Jesus Christ for all of the ages until he comes again, "These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you." These things we don't compromise on. These things we don't dilute. These things we put front and center. These things you emphasize. Not politics. Not entertainment. Not self-fulfillment. These things about Christ. These things about redemption. These things about what flows out of a life that's been truly redeemed. These things the true church speaks, exhorts and reproves without apology, without compromise, without dilution. We teach, beloved, we teach redemption with authority because God has spoken, and this is his word.

Back 450 some years ago, godly men put together what is known as the Heidelberg Catechism in 1563. Question #1 of the Heidelberg Catechism asks this and it's the question that pulls together our response this morning. Question #1 of the Heidelberg Catechism from 1563. "What is your only comfort in life and in death?" And in the language of the way they used to write, it's kind of a long sentence but stay with it. I broke it up, put in one period anyway just to conform it to modern thought. Beloved, this is your answer if you're in Christ. What is your only comfort in life and in death? The

answer is this, "that I with body and soul both in life and in death am not my own but I belong to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, who with His precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins and redeemed me from all the power of the devil. He preserves me that without the will of My Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head. Yes, all things must work together for my salvation wherefore by His Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready henceforth to live for Him."

Bow with me in prayer. I ask you, my friend, whether you love this world or do you love Christ? Are you redeemed? Jesus Christ paid the price, now your faith and your life tells the story.

Father, work in our hearts that we might receive these elements with great gratitude to the glory of Christ who loved us and gave Himself up for us. In Jesus' name. Amen.