

Justified to Be Glorified

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Well, we come to a thrilling text this morning found in Titus 3, and I invite you to turn to the book of Titus with me. Our primary text will be verse 7 of Titus 3, but I want to go all the way back to introduce it to chapter 2, verse 11 and read through verse 7 to set the context. You'll see why in a moment that we choose to do it this way. The theme of grace, the theme of love, the theme of mercy expressed in the gospel is the highest proclamation that any man could make to another anywhere in the course of human time, and we read in Titus 2, verse 11, that

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.

1 Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, 2 to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. 3 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. 4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, 5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

This passage gives us a very systematic way of thinking about the nature of God's salvation of sinners and the reality is, is that Christians are people who have been wondrously saved with much, much more to come. We find that the ground of our salvation is in Jesus Christ. Look at verse 14. The ground of our salvation, the basis of it, the sole foundation of our salvation is found in verse 13, "our great God and Savior,

Christ Jesus, 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 works." Our salvation is found in Christ, not in anything of our own.

The need for our salvation is found in us. The reason that we need to be saved is because that we are sinners who fall short of the glory of God. Look at verse 3, "For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another." We need to be saved because we're like that. Certainly before our conversion this is what dominated our lives. This was the nature and the expression and the overflow of everything in our hearts was that kind of wickedness, a kind of carnality.

And so the need for our salvation is found in us. The ground for our salvation is found in Christ. The motive for our salvation, the motive for our salvation is found in Christ. It's found in his mercy, not in any merit of our own, not in any desire of our own. Left to themselves unaided, no sinner would come to Christ at all. No one desires him. Romans 3 says there is none who seeks for God. There is none who does good. And so it is critical for us to understand both for a right understanding of our salvation and a view of the world around us, that there is no merit in any sinner, there is no desire for salvation in any sinner. The impulse for salvation, the initial movement of salvation came from the mercy of God and the mercy of God alone.

Look at verses 4 and 5. Salvation is motivated by the mercy of God, not the merit of man. Verse 4, "when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Beloved, look closely, drink deeply from the fountain of the kindness of God that is expressed in that passage just by the nouns that are used. Verse 4, the kindness of God our Savior; his love for mankind; his mercy in verse 5; verse 6 richly poured out upon us; verse 7 justified by his grace. You look at these things and you step back from our self-righteous foolishness, our pride and our narrow focus and repent, as it were, of our self-righteousness, you look, and we repent further of our narrow, stingy thoughts about God and we see here revealed a fullness of love, a fullness of goodwill, a fullness of favor towards sinners that is really beyond the comprehension of men to fully grasp. We'll spend eternity giving praise to God for this kindness and this love and this mercy and this grace because, and it's so important to keep in mind that he showed this love and grace and mercy and kindness, he showed this on people, look at verse 3, he showed this upon us, he showered this upon us when while in the midst of the fact that we were foolish and disobedient and deceived and enslaved, full of malice and envy and hateful and hating one another.

It reminds me of what the Apostle Paul said elsewhere in Romans 5 when he said that, "while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare

even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The two things go together, the depth and the blackness and the darkness of your sin and mine over against the marvelous white glory, the shining Shekinah glory of God in all of the fullness and the effulgence of his majestic character, love and mercy and kindness and grace poured out toward men like that. Those who were helpless, those who were ungodly, those who were sinners, those who were enemies, it says in Romans 5:10.

And so beloved, if nothing else comes out of this time together today, I would hope and trust that the Spirit of God would impress you deeply with the great mercy of God which is the motive of our salvation. There was nothing worthy in us. There was nothing attractive in us. There was nothing in us to draw the love of God toward us, as if otherwise he would have gone along, but he looked and saw, "Oh, there's something good that I can set my affection on." It was nothing like that at all. Salvation is the result of the going forth of the goodness of God toward unworthy objects.

And so our motive, the motive for our salvation is found in mercy, not in merit, and alongside that, the power for our salvation, the power for our salvation must have come from God, not from us. The power for our salvation is found in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Triune Godhead, not in our will. It was not the power, and this is a distinctive of biblical salvation, biblical soteriology, the power for salvation had to come from God himself, not from the unaided human will. That's a foolish thought. How could anyone that was living in the midst and had a character marked by verse 3, hateful and hating one another, how could anything, any kind of movement toward a holy, loving God have come from a heart like that? It's a denial of Scripture to say anything to the contrary. No, the power for our salvation is found in the Spirit of God.

Look at verse 5 again, "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit." He saved us by the renewing of the Holy Spirit, "whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior." Notice that even in this compact passage, you have a Trinitarian salvation here. You have God the Father showing forth his kindness and his love for mankind. You have Christ the Savior being magnified for his redemptive work. And you have the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of sinners. Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one essence, three distinct consciousness within that essence all working together to accomplish salvation. It's reminiscent of Ephesians 1 where you see God the Father, God the Son, God the Spirit in verses 3 through 14 exercising in a common exercise of the divine will to accomplish the salvation of sinners.

You know one of the reasons to preach Scripture seriously, to endeavor at least to preach it deeply as opposed to a superficial approach designed to make an audience chuckle and feel good about themselves, when you're trying to make an audience chuckle, you are not going to bring them into the depths of the Triune work in salvation because those things do not appeal to the carnal man, and as a result the glory of God gets pushed to the side for the sake of some human motive. Well, out on the thought here at least. We see the ground of our salvation in Jesus Christ. We see that the need for salvation is our

desperately lost and dead condition. The motive for our salvation was found in God's mercy, not in our merit. And the power for salvation came from the will of God, not the will of man.

Today as we look at verse 7, as we come to the concluding pinnacle you might say of this extended text, Scripture tells us the result of our salvation. It tells us what salvation has accomplished for us in a very brief, compact manner, it says there in verse 7. We're going to see that that salvation, biblical salvation, biblical deliverance has changed our very status before a holy God and it has also changed our very destiny. This is cosmic in its implications. This is cosmic in the force of what it says. An uncreated holy God, how do you stand before him? Salvation establishes that for the believer. What happens to you when you die? What happens when life is over? What lies beyond the grave? What will be the first moment like for you when you breathe your last on earth? What's the ultimate destiny? Beloved, beloved, I sure hope the pinnacle of our destiny is more than what kind of career we can come up with, what kind of family we have, what kind of relationships we have, how much money we can bank, what kind of house we can get. I sure hope it's more than that, don't you? Because all that stuff is passing. Jesus said in Matthew 24:35, "Heaven and earth will pass away but My word will not pass away." What's going to happen to your eternal soul, beloved? What is the destiny of your eternal soul? That's a thought worth contemplating. Whether you're saved or unsaved, that's the only thought that matters. Everything else is just trifles for a wisp of time, passing like a vapor in the wind even if it does last 70 or 80 years. Well, the glory of the biblical good news, the gospel of salvation, is that in Jesus Christ there is a secure status before a holy God to be found that can never be violated or taken away. There is a purpose. There is a reason to live that echoes throughout the halls of eternity given to us in Christ.

You know, I can't make, I can't make people become Christians. I can't do anything to change their hearts. But I hope at least by the Spirit of God today as the Spirit works in your heart through the preaching of the word, to impress upon you that biblical salvation is lofty, and if you have been saved by Christ, that you have the pearl of great price, you have that which is more valuable than anything else. "Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life I'll sow." Let it all go if you have Christ. And if you're not a Christian, to at least see something of the dawning of light in the midst of your dark soul that there is something glorious in Christian salvation worthy of you pursuing and seeking God for until you know that your soul has been delivered.

So what we're going to see here today in this verse, all too quickly, two things, two things today. One is that God justifies us in Christ and, secondly, God will bring us to glory. What has God done for you in Christ Jesus? He has justified you and he will glorify you. You are wondrously saved with more to come, and the riches of grace are on full display in what we are to see here.

Let's look at Titus 3:7. Just focus on this one text. Titus 3:7, "so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Justified and made heirs. Justified and glorified. This is what our Christ has done for us, and so let's consider, first of all, this whole matter of God justifies us in Christ. In justification,

something wonderful happens to the guilty sinner of verse 3. Remember the guilty sinner that we all once were, the guilty sinner in verse 3, foolish, enslaved, hateful, hating one another, disobedient, deceived, a slave to Satan, a slave to sin, doomed to suffer the wrath of God. There is nothing noble as we contemplate sinful man in his position before God. Well, in justification, God has addressed that guilty state. In justification, what God does is he removes your guilt. When God saved you, he took away all of your guilt and declared you righteous in his sight. It's a legal verdict. Justification is not about you becoming a better person, justification is about how you stand legally in the courtroom of God. That's a pretty important question because as we've said many, many times, each one of us, each one of us in this room, some sooner, some later, but the outcome is all of the same, each one of us has an appointment before the throne of God to stand before him and to give an account for the life that we have lived, to give an account for the ways that we have sinned against him, his law that we have broken and ignored and defied, our failure to love, our failure to love God, first of all, because that's the great commandment to love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, strength and mind, to love others as we love ourselves, or failure to honor his word. You know, there's just no hope. There's no hope to go before God clothed in our own filthy rags for that appointment, that inevitable appointment that we have.

And one of the reasons that I emphasize it is that, you know, by the by the grace of God, by the grace of God no one of you is going to be able to say, "I didn't know this time was coming." You've been told. You're responsible. You're accountable. You know. You know that that appointment is coming and everything else is secondary by comparison. What will happen to you then? What will happen to you then, you Titus 3:3 person? What's going to happen to you? How can that possibly come out well for you before a holy God?

Well, the hope that's offered in Christ freely is a free gift of justification, justification being a legal verdict on our souls. Whereas we come before God in guilt, in Christ something has changed. God accepts us in Christ for the sake of his beloved Son. And how does he do that? Well, in justification, God declares a judgment on the sinner. And what is justification? What does this word mean in Scripture that is the key to going through that appointment at the throne of God safely and coming out well on the other end? Everyone should know the meaning of justification as it is expressed in the Westminster Shorter Catechism Question 33. Everyone should know this. You, as a Christian, should be able to articulate something like this to understand the fullness of what justification is and why it is so precious and why it should be defended, why it should be taught and not passed over as only so much academic theology.

What is justification, the question asked? The answer given is this, "Justification is an act of God's free grace wherein He pardons all of our sins and accepts us as righteous in His sight only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone." Don't let your eyes glaze over at that if you're tempted to think in such terms. This is vital, healthy truth for every soul. Justification is an act of God's free grace wherein he pardons all our sins and accepts us as righteous in his sight only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone. You can Google it. You'll find it

justification, Westminster Shorter Catechism, you'll find it. For today, we want to just look at it simply and understand that there's a dual aspect to justification that goes to the heart of that somber appointment that you have at the throne of God, that appointed time where no one will be with you and you will be alone before Holy God.

What happens in justification, and why is it so vital for the knowledge of that coming day? Well, there's a negative and a positive sense to it. In a negative sense, what does God do in justification? In a negative sense, he forgives all of your sins. Everything about Titus 3:3 is forgiven. It is pardoned in all of its fullness. And when the definition says he pardons all our sins, all means comprehensively all. All of your past sins. All of your present sins. All of your future sins are forgiven. Your minor sins, so-called, and your major sins. The scandals and the private iniquities that only you know about in your heart. The sins that you know about, the sins that you're too spiritually dull and sluggish to even recognize, all pardoned. The sins that you've done intentionally, the sins that you've committed unaware. There is no such thing as venial sins being forgiven, but mortal sins being outside the realm of justification and threatening the future of your eternal soul.

Look, I say this reverently what I'm about to say, and part of the reason that this is fresh on my mind is I get a lot of correspondence from people expressing appreciation for the series I did on Roman Catholicism a few years ago, and so it keeps that fresh in my mind just by the nature of letters and emails that come in. And what I say reverently is that the Catholic theology is damnable. It is not an alternative version of Christianity. It is a corrupt religious system from the pit of hell that hides the glory of justification, that hides the glory of God's free grace in Christ, that hides the wonder of his one-time sacrifice at the cross. You know, 10 1/2 years ago we started Truth Community Church. One of the reasons that we wanted to have this church here and under the confession of faith that we use is because we understand that this region in which we live and minister is one with a deep-rooted history in Roman Catholicism and we view it as our privilege and our responsibility, our duty and our privilege to be able to set forth, in contrast, what the Bible says against that system that has held so much of this region in darkness for so very long. Justification, biblical justification is a dagger in the heart of it all because justification tells us that God pardons all of our sins for the sake of Christ, that when Christ saves a man, when you put your faith in Christ, God does something wonderful for you and he gives you the benefit, he gives you the benefit of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. That blood which was shed is the payment for the sins of the people of God against him. That blood which was sufficient to satisfy the demands of divine justice against all of the lawbreaking that his people had done. That wonderful work of Christ in which he said, "It's finished." Not it's started. And now Rome will pick things up and do it week by week, day by day, with a repetition of this sacrifice. I realize that I offend some people when I talk about Catholicism this way. You know what? I don't care. I really, really don't care because Catholicism is an offense against God and therefore it's an offense against me. It offends me to see Scripture so twisted and distorted. It offends me to think of 1.25 billion people being held in darkness trying to work their way out of their sins by a demonically controlled system that controls and manipulates them, and then hands them over to hell. How could you not be offended by that? Those of you that

have been saved out of Catholicism, no one has to explain to you, do they, the glory of the gospel delivering you from that bondage and that darkness and the constant fear and works based approach. No, in justification God forgives all of your sins past, present, and future, known and unknown, intentional and unintentional. 1 John 1:7, says the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Beloved, to say anything else is to besmirch the mercy, kindness, love, and grace of God that is expressed in this passage. It is to cover up. It is to throw away. It is to throw a black drop-cloth over the cross to hide its glory. You and I can't be a party to that. You and I should be, first leading the charge to grab that drop-cloth and yank it away so that the glory of Christ is on display, and what he has done for sinners is evident to all. Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture, 1 Corinthians 15. And when he died, he paid the price for all of our sins at Calvary.

And so, in justification, God pardons all of our sins. There's another aspect to it that that definition leads us into and helps us to understand. It's that God accepts us as righteous in Christ. In a positive sense, God accepts us as righteous. The sins have been washed away and now he accepts us as righteous. He receives us as those whose status entitles them to be in his holy presence. Bold and confident access to him, Ephesians 3:12 says. In Romans 4:5 through 8 we read this as Paul elsewhere is talking about this great doctrine of justification. He says, "to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness." In other words, when you abandon your efforts to earn favor with God through your own good works, when you accept the biblical testimony that your soul is guilty and condemned, you accept the fact that salvation is not by deeds that you have done in righteousness, you forsake all of that, you repent of that works-based mindset. And to just know that there are converted Catholics here where biblical truth is fresh and vibrant to your souls is a great encouragement to me. You reject that works-based mindset and you embrace Christ. You believe in him. You receive him by faith alone.

Verse 5, Romans 4:5, "to the one who believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness." When you believe in Christ, God imputes a righteousness to you. He credits the very righteousness of Christ to your account and says, "I accept you for the sake of My Son. Not for the sake of what you have done, for the sake of what My Son has done," if I can be so bold as to speak in the first person that way. I mean it in a third person sense. God accepts us in Christ not for anything that we have done, but for everything that Christ has done. Christ living a perfect life, perfect obedience to the law of God, no one could convict him of sin. Christ invited them, "If I've done wrong, bear witness of the wrong." They couldn't say a thing. Even Pilate as he condemned him, washed his hands trying to evade his own responsibility for the death of Christ, he said, "I find no guilt in this man." There was no guilt because there was perfect righteousness there. And what God does is verse 6 of Romans 4, "God credits righteousness apart from works." God credits you with the righteousness of Christ, having pardoned all of your sins, he now credits you in the same instantaneous act, credits you with the righteousness of Christ so that he accepts you not for who you are but for who Christ is. "He made Him

who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

How can God declare you righteous when in fact you are guilty? He treats you as you are in Christ. In unspeakable grace, he gives you the fullness of the benefit of the life and death of Jesus Christ and credits all of the virtue of Christ to your account. You say, "But I didn't do anything for that." Precisely. This is undeserved favor. This is a free gift that we receive by not doing things but by receiving Christ and resting in him alone, saying, "God, my only hope, my only righteousness is in Christ. I have none of my own. Shield me, receive me in Christ. Receive me for the sake of Your Son. Keep me for the sake of Your Son, not for anything in me." The obedience of Christ, the death of Christ met all the demands of God's law. Jesus Christ himself satisfies divine righteousness. Jesus Christ alone satisfies divine righteousness and divine justice.

And so what God does, what God does in justification is he charges Christ, we can put it this way, he charges Christ with all of your guilt. Christ receives the condemnation, received the condemnation at the cross. Scripture says, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree," Deuteronomy 22. Christ took all of your sin as he bore the wrath of God at the cross and cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Christ, bore all of your sin at the cross, bore the fullness of the eternal wrath of God against it having lived a perfect life that he was offering up as the sacrifice. Now, 2000 years later, beloved, when you receive Christ by faith, when you put your faith in Christ as the Spirit of God worked in your heart, what God does is gives you the full benefit of everything that Christ has done. You're in a union with Christ. You're united with him in the fullness of what he has done. His obedience credited to your account. His death for sin credited to your account. Your sin assigned to him, judged, dealt with. His righteousness, perfect enduring, credited to your account so that you have an eternal state with God that can never be taken away. And so. Sinclair Ferguson puts it this way, "In the sight of God, we are not only innocent but as righteous as Christ is." It's a bold statement, well-expressing the biblical teaching. teaching.

What has God done for you in salvation? Think about it this way. I want to impress upon you the negative and the positive aspects of this. A homely illustration I'm about to give to you, okay? Homely in multiple ways. The content of the illustration is homely and the guy who's speaking it homely. Say that you owed a great debt to a wealthy man. You owed him, what's a big sum of money to you? \$50,000, five million, 50 million? A debt that you can't pay. Say that you owed a wealthy man that kind of debt, and everything about your life was doomed to try to pay off portions of it. Your wages are garnished. Liens against your house. You know the routine. You owed a great debt to that man that that you were never going to have the means to repay. Wouldn't it be wonderful if he just unilaterally forgave that debt and said, "You don't have to pay that debt anymore." That's wonderful and that's a bit of a picture of the negative side of justification. All of your sins against God, that great debt against him, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." All of that debt forgiven and say, "Man, that would be wonderful." But do you know what? You walk outside, if that's all that's happened for you, you're still broke. You're broke. You may have the debt erased but you have nothing of your own. Suppose

that that wealthy benefactor, that wealthy friend of yours, went one step further and he said, "You come with me," and he goes to his bank and he instructs the teller, "You put his name on my account. I want him to have full access to everything. He has full title to it." If he adds you to his bank account, beloved, you're not broke. All of his wealth is yours.

That's a meager picture of what Christ has done for us and what God has done for us in justification. All of our sins have been pardoned so that the debt is paid in full, never to be brought against us again. But what God has done for us has gone further in that the full righteousness of Christ has been imputed to you, a perfect righteousness credited to your account so that nothing can ever come between you and God, nothing can ever separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus your Lord because the fullness of the righteousness of Christ has already been applied to your account. You see, the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin but justification goes further, God credits you with the perfect righteousness of Christ and on the basis of Christ not you, on the basis of Christ declares you righteous so that there is no contribution you make to the declaration of righteousness that God makes on your behalf. God declares you righteous for the sake of his Son and on the basis of what his Son has done, and that twin aspect of justification should have a twin aspect, a twin effect on your soul to realize that you've been justified in that way in a negative sense is completely humbling, completely humbling. To say, "I am a Christian through no merit of my own. I am in the love of God through nothing I have done. Sheer sovereign grace." So that, as it says in Ephesians 2, so that no one would boast. I didn't do anything. God didn't foresee me doing anything. This was all from a loving act of God toward me that I did not deserve and that humbles us so that no one would boast.

On the positive side, beloved, you let these kinds of truth sink into your soul, what it does is it magnifies Christ in your heart and you see in a way that goes beyond superficial sentiment, that goes beyond being manipulated by loud music, based on truth, based on biblical doctrine, worshiping in response to truth, not human environment, you say, "Christ is really, really glorious and wonderful, and He has dealt well with my soul, and I love Him and I exalt Him and I glorify Him. Look at what He's done. He left heaven to come to earth. He lived that perfect life. He died for me. He gave himself for me. Me, a Titus 3:3 kind of guy. He did that for me. He thought of me on the cross somehow. He bore all of my sins. Somehow he identified with the fullness of it in the infinite aspect of His divine nature. And why would He do that? I was His enemy. I cursed His name," you say. "For so long. For so long, I hardened my heart against the people who tried to tell me about Him. I hardened my heart against a loving mom, a loving dad who told me about Christ. I hardened my heart against the teachers, against the pastors who pleaded with me for my soul. I hardened for so long and yet here I am now in Christ. Look at all the sin He overlooked. Look at all that He passed over. All that He's graciously forgiven so that I could be one of His."

When you understand justification in a most rudimentary way, my sins forgiven, the fullness of the righteousness of Christ given to me, all of this, you glorify Christ and you look at the wholeness of it, you step back and you just look at the fullness of it all and

you say, "That's what grace looks like, undeserved favor. And I worship Father, Son and Holy Spirit for what they've done in redeeming my soul chosen by the Father, redeemed at the cross, applied by the Spirit in my conversion. My eyes are dry." My heart is pouring tears of joy in response to the goodness of Christ to me and to so many of you.

If that was all, it would be magnificent, we'd say, "We're wondrously saved." God intends us to see the full picture of salvation, the fullness of what he has done. Yes, you're wonderfully saved in the way that God has justified you if you are in Christ but there's more to come. There's more to come. Oh, there's more to come. Titus 3:7. as we come to our second point this morning, God will bring us to glory. God will bring us to glory. Titus 3:7, "so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Eternal life which we expect to come. Confident expectation. There is a lasting dimension to this. There is an eternal aspect to the life that we have now in Christ but there is an eternal, if you can think about eternity and timelessness in a chronological way, there is an endless dimension to this. The purpose of salvation transcends this earthly life.

Point number 2 if I haven't said it, God will bring us to glory. The purpose of salvation transcends this earthly life, and I am so glad it does. You were justified and even, if I can put it this way, with an even greater end goal in mind. What I mean by that is it's not for this life only, it's for the life to come. Justified by his grace, we would be made heirs, we would receive an inheritance that is still ahead of us as we walk on this guilty sod. We wait for God as Christians, as we're living this life, we are waiting for him to fulfill the inheritance that he has promised to us. Romans 8:16 and 17. Don't bother turning there. I'll just read it. You can write it in your notes. "The Spirit Himself," Romans 8:16 and 17, "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God," testifies that we've been justified, that we've been born again, that we are children of God, 1 John 3:2, "and if children," verse 17, "if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him." Suffering in this life, sorrows in this life, you bet. You bet. Bruised hearts. Broken lives. Consequences of your own sin understood. Understand that in grace, God appointed you for a destiny that will make all of this pale in comparison.

God saved us not only for this life but for the life to come. In 1 Peter 1:3 through 5 we read this, this explosion of worship as the letter proper begins, "Blessed be the God and 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." You're saved now, the fullness of Christ has been given to us, but there's more to come. That's the glory of it. And this inheritance that for which we are waiting, this inheritance into which we will one day walk will not be like this life. This life sodden down with sorrow, declining, perishing, death, sin, temptation, all of that stuff that we know no other existence, somehow that which permeates our existence on this earth, somehow it's all going to be gone and what will be

left behind, what will be better stated, what will replace it when we are with Christ is that which is imperishable, undefiled, and will not fade away.

When we've been there 10,000 years there's not going to be any sense of being tired of this, of it losing its luster. There's not going to be any of the sense of a young child receiving a Christmas gift toy and getting tired of it after two or three days and say, "What else is new? What else is there?" It's not going to be anything like that. The glory and the majesty of heaven, of being in the immediate presence of Jesus Christ is going to be so enrapturing, so ennobling, so marvelous in the explosion upon whatever our glorified senses are like that it will never get old. It will never be tiring. It will never be boring. And beloved that's what awaits you as a Christian. This is what God has prepared for you. Eye has not seen nor ear has heard the things that God has in store for those that are his. And Christian, because the work of Christ in your justification is so perfect, you won't miss it. Your salvation, if it's real, it's secure. The God who saved you will keep you. The Christ who died for you lives for you. The Spirit who indwells you will deliver you into this glory.

Yes, we're wonderfully saved, wondrously saved in Christ, and there's so much more to come in eternity future. No wonder the Scripture writers so often say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." And to think that Christ freely offers this gift to everyone who hears, this isn't only for Jews, this isn't only for Gentiles, it's not only for whites, sure ain't only for Blacks, Asians, it's not just for men, it's not just for women. This, as it says in Galatians 3, I want to read this. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise."

This is a gift but it's given to those who respond to it in a particular way. Jesus said, "Repent and believe in the gospel." Christ calls you to repent of your sinful ways, calls you to repent of your Titus 3:3 life and to believe in him alone for salvation. And he promises by the authority of God who can never lie, he says, "The one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out." You know, if someone walks out of this room today unsaved, the guilt of that act, the guilt of that defiance is incalculable and it is also inexcusable. A free gift of this kind of magnitude, full justification, full glory, never to be taken away is presented to you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ with a promise from him himself saying, "The one who comes to Me I'll not cast out." Why would you turn away? Christian, as you walk out, let it be filled with praise and glory to this great God of grace, mercy, patience and kindness on your Titus 3:3 soul.

Let's pray together.

Gracious God, we honor You and we thank You for the wonder and the glory of Jesus Christ. Father, may the truth of Your word, may the truth of Christ live forever. May all that which has risen up against it in false religion and the defiance of the hearts of sinners, may it all be put away, Father, so that Christ would not only reign supreme but be seen as supreme. Father, would You please hasten that day when every knee will bow

and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father? Only then will the created universe be in harmony with reality. So hasten that day, O God, for the glory of Your own name, the blessing that You have for Your people, and the mercy that You would still show to sinners who would repent and believe. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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